A219 Exploring the Classical World

Readings Book 1

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CONTENTS

Introduction 5

Course Introduction 6

Reading 1 Herodotus 7.228: Epitaphs 6

Reading 2 Herodotus 7.238: Xerxes and the Spartan king 6

Block 1 7

Reading 1.1 Homer, *The Iliad*, Book 1 7

Reading 1.2 Homer, *The Iliad*, 2.211–77 18

Reading 1.3 Homer, *The Iliad*, Book 22 20

Reading 1.4 Homer, *The Iliad*, Book 23 30

Reading 1.5 Homer, *The Iliad*, Book 24 47

Reading 1.6 Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 1–284 62

Block 2 69

Reading 2.1 Aeschylus, *Persians* 69

Reading 2.2 Pausanias 1.15: The *Stoa Poikilē* 92

Reading 2.3 Herodotus 7.43: Xerxes at Troy 92

Reading 2.4 Herodotus 7.150–1: The refusal of Argos 92

Reading 2.5 Pausanias 1.23.8–1.24.4: The Acropolis 93

Reading 2.6 Pausanias 1.24.5 and 7: The Parthenon 94

Reading 2.7 Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 12–13 94

Reading 2.8 Thucydides 2.34–46: Pericles' Funeral Speech 96

Reading 2.9 Translator's introduction to Thucydides 100

Reading 2.10 Thucydides 2.13–14: Pericles' advice before the invasion 103

Reading 2.11 Thucydides 1.21–2: Thucydides on writing history 104

Reading 2.12 Thucydides 2.47–54: The plague in Athens 104

Reading 2.13 Thucydides 2.59–65: Pericles' last speech 107

Reading 2.14 (a) Speech concerning the dead, attributed to Gorgias, DK 82 B 63 (a semi-verse translation) 110

Reading 2.14 (b) Speech concerning the dead, attributed to Gorgias (a literal translation) 111

Reading 2.15 *Menexenus* 234–5, attributed to Plato 112

Reading 2.16 Gorgias, *Encomium of Helen*, 8, 11 and 13 113

Reading 2.17 Lincoln's address at Gettysburg 113

Reading 2.18 Edward Everett's speech at Gettysburg (beginning) 114

Reading 2.19 Bertie Ahern's speech on the occasion of the reinterment of the remains of Volunteers executed during the War of Independence 116

Reading 2.20 Aristophanes, *Lysistrata* 118

Reading 2.21 Thucydides 1.20: Harmodius and Aristogeiton 201

Reading 2.22 Three drinking songs 201

Reading 2.23 Thucydides 1.102: The revolt of the helots 202

Acknowledgements **203**

Introduction

This book contains various readings relating to the A219 Course Introduction, and to Blocks 1 and 2; there is a corresponding book for Blocks 3 to 5. The readings are organised by block and consist of both ancient and modern texts. The course team have given most readings descriptive titles to help you find your way around more easily, but it is important to remember that these titles are not part of the readings themselves. In the case of ancient readings, any such descriptive title is preceded by the proper reference which you should use when you refer to the text in question. For instance, the reference for Reading 1 of the Course Introduction is Herodotus 7.228, while the descriptive title 'Epitaphs' has been added for convenience only. The full source, including translations and publisher, is provided below the title of each text where available. Some readings are accompanied by commentaries, in particular Readings 2.1 and 2.20.

You will be referred to particular readings as you work through each block. In most cases you will be asked to perform a specific task in relation to what you read. There is no need for you to look at this book independently of these tasks, but you may of course choose to leaf through it in its own right. If you do, remember that the texts were not selected to be read by themselves but to form part of the teaching material overall. In many cases, important information about the context is given in the blocks, and the texts printed here achieve a balance only in combination with the blocks, as well as the set texts and the audio-visual materials.

Reading 1 Herodotus 7.228: Epitaphs

(Source: de Sélincourt, A. (trans.) revised by J. Marincola (2003) Herodotus: *The Histories*, 7.228, London: Penguin, p.495)

The dead were buried where they fell, and with them the men who had been killed before those dismissed by Leonidas left the pass. Over them is this inscription, in honour of the whole force:

> Four thousand here from Pelops' land
> Against three million once did stand.

The Spartans have a special epitaph; it runs:

> Go tell the Spartans, you who read:
> We took their orders, and here lie dead.

For the seer Megistias there is the following:

> Here lies Megistias, who died
> When the Mede passed Spercheius' tide.
> A prophet; yet he scorned to save
> Himself, but shared the Spartans' grave.

The columns with the epitaphs inscribed on them were erected in honour of the dead by the Amphictyons – though the epitaph upon the seer Megistias was the work of Simonides, the son of Leoprepes, who put it there for friendship's sake.

Reading 2 Herodotus 7.238: Xerxes and the Spartan king

(Source: de Sélincourt, A. (trans.) revised by J. Marincola (2003) Herodotus: *The Histories*, 7.238, London: Penguin, p.499)

After this conversation Xerxes went over the battlefield to see the bodies, and having been told that Leonidas was king of Sparta and commander of the Spartan force, ordered his head to be cut off and fixed on a stake. This is in my opinion the strongest evidence – though there is plenty more – that King Xerxes, while Leonidas was still alive, felt fiercer anger against him than against any other man; had that not been so, he would never have committed this outrage upon his body; for normally the Persians, more than any other nation I know of, honour men who distinguish themselves in war. However, Xerxes' order was carried out.

Block 1

Reading 1.1 Homer, *The Iliad*, Book 1

(Source: Lattimore, R. (trans.) (1961) *The Iliad of Homer*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, pp. 59–75)

Sing, goddess, the anger of Peleus' son Achilleus
and its devastation, which put pains thousandfold upon the Achaians,
hurled in their multitudes to the house of Hades strong souls
of heroes, but gave their bodies to be the delicate feasting
of dogs, of all birds, and the will of Zeus was accomplished
since that time when first there stood in division of conflict
Atreus' son the lord of men and brilliant Achilleus.

What god was it then set them together in bitter collision?
Zeus' son and Leto's, Apollo, who in anger at the king drove
the foul pestilence along the host, and the people perished,
since Atreus' son had dishonoured Chryses, priest of Apollo,
when he came beside the fast ships of the Achaians to ransom
back his daughter, carrying gifts beyond count and holding
in his hands wound on a staff of gold the ribbons of Apollo
who strikes from afar, and supplicated all the Achaians,
but above all Atreus' two sons, the marshals of the people:
'Sons of Atreus and you other strong-greaved Achaians,
to you may the gods grant who have their homes on Olympos
Priam's city to be plundered and a fair homecoming thereafter,
but may you give me back my own daughter and take the ransom,
giving honour to Zeus' son who strikes from afar, Apollo.'

Then all the rest of the Achaians cried out in favour
that the priest be respected and the shining ransom be taken;
yet this pleased not the heart of Atreus' son Agamemnon,
but harshly he drove him away with a strong order upon him:
'Never let me find you again, old sir, near our hollow
ships, neither lingering now nor coming again hereafter,
for fear your staff and the god's ribbons help you no longer.
The girl I will not give back; sooner will old age come upon her
in my own house, in Argos, far from her own land, going
up and down by the loom and being in my bed as my companion.
So go now, do not make me angry; so you will be safer.'

So he spoke, and the old man in terror obeyed him
and went silently away beside the murmuring sea beach.
Over and over the old man prayed as he walked in solitude
to King Apollo, whom Leto of the lovely hair bore: 'Hear me,
lord of the silver bow who set your power about Chryse
and Killa the sacrosanct, who are lord in strength over Tenedos,
Smintheus, if ever it pleased your heart that I built your temple,
if ever it pleased you that I burned all the rich thigh pieces
of bulls, of goats, then bring to pass this wish I pray for:
let your arrows make the Danaans pay for my tears shed.'

So he spoke in prayer, and Phoibos Apollo heard him,
and strode down along the pinnacles of Olympos, angered
in his heart, carrying across his shoulders the bow and the hooded
quiver; and the shafts clashed on the shoulders of the god walking

angrily. He came as night comes down and knelt then
apart and opposite the ships and let go an arrow.
Terrible was the clash that rose from the bow of silver.
First he went after the mules and the circling hounds, then let go
a tearing arrow against the men themselves and struck them.
The corpse fires burned everywhere and did not stop burning.
Nine days up and down the host ranged the god's arrows,
but on the tenth Achilleus called the people to assembly;
a thing put into his mind by the goddess of the white arms, Hera,
who had pity upon the Danaans when she saw them dying.
Now when they were all assembled in one place together,
Achilleus of the swift feet stood up among them and spoke forth:
'Son of Atreus, I believe now that straggling backwards
we must make our way home if we can even escape death,
if fighting now must crush the Achaians and the plague likewise.
No, come, let us ask some holy man, some prophet,
even an interpreter of dreams, since a dream also
comes from Zeus, who can tell why Phoibos Apollo is so angry,
if for the sake of some vow, some hecatomb he blames us,
if given the fragrant smoke of lambs, of he goats, somehow
he can be made willing to beat the bane aside from us.'
He spoke thus and sat down again, and among them stood up
Kalchas, Thestor's son, far the best of the bird interpreters,
who knew all things that were, the things to come and the things past,
who guided into the land of Ilion the ships of the Achaians
through that seercraft of his own that Phoibos Apollo gave him.
He in kind intention toward all stood forth and addressed them:
'You have bidden me, Achilleus beloved of Zeus, to explain to
you this anger of Apollo the lord who strikes from afar. Then
I will speak; yet make me a promise and swear before me
readily by word and work of your hands to defend me,
since I believe I shall make a man angry who holds great kingship
over the men of Argos, and all the Achaians obey him.
For a king when he is angry with a man beneath him is too strong,
and suppose even for the day itself he swallow down his anger,
he still keeps bitterness that remains until its fulfilment
deep in his chest. Speak forth then, tell me if you will protect me.'
Then in answer again spoke Achilleus of the swift feet:
'Speak, interpreting whatever you know, and fear nothing.
In the name of Apollo beloved of Zeus to whom you, Kalchas,
make your prayers when you interpret the gods' will to the Danaans,
no man so long as I am alive above earth and see daylight
shall lay the weight of his hands on you beside the hollow ships,
not one of all the Danaans, even if you mean Agamemnon,
who now claims to be far the greatest of all the Achaians.'
At this the blameless seer took courage again and spoke forth:
'No, it is not for the sake of some vow or hecatomb he blames us,
but for the sake of his priest whom Agamemnon dishonoured
and would not give him back his daughter nor accept the ransom.
Therefore the archer sent griefs against us and will send them
still, nor sooner thrust back the shameful plague from the Danaans
until we give the glancing-eyed girl back to her father
without price, without ransom, and lead also a blessed hecatomb

to Chryse; thus we might propitiate and persuade him.'
He spoke thus and sat down again, and among them stood up
Atreus' son the hero wide-ruling Agamemnon
raging, the heart within filled black to brim with anger
from beneath, but his two eyes showed like fire in their blazing.
First of all he eyed Kalchas bitterly and spoke to him:
'Seer of evil: never yet have you told me a good thing.
Always the evil things are dear to your heart to prophesy,
but nothing excellent have you said nor ever accomplished.
Now once more you make divination to the Danaans, argue
forth your reason why he who strikes from afar afflicts them,
because I for the sake of the girl Chryseis would not take
the shining ransom; and indeed I wish greatly to have her
in my own house; since I like her better than Klytaimestra
my own wife, for in truth she is no way inferior,
neither in build nor stature nor wit, not in accomplishment.
Still I am willing to give her back, if such is the best way.
I myself desire that my people be safe, not perish.
Find me then some prize that shall be my own, lest I only
among the Argives go without, since that were unfitting;
you are all witnesses to this thing, that my prize goes elsewhere.'
Then in answer again spoke brilliant swift-footed Achilleus:
'Son of Atreus, most lordly, greediest for gain of all men,
how shall the great-hearted Achaians give you a prize now?
There is no great store of things lying about I know of.
But what we took from the cities by storm has been distributed;
it is unbecoming for the people to call back things once given.
No, for the present give the girl back to the god; we Achaians
thrice and four times over will repay you, if ever Zeus gives
into our hands the strong-walled citadel of Troy to be plundered.'
Then in answer again spoke powerful Agamemnon:
'Not that way, good fighter though you be, godlike Achilleus,
strive to cheat, for you will not deceive, you will not persuade me.
What do you want? To keep your own prize and have me sit here
lacking one? Are you ordering me to give this girl back?
Either the great-hearted Achaians shall give me a new prize
chosen according to my desire to atone for the girl lost,
or else if they will not give me one I myself shall take her,
your own prize, or that of Aias, or that of Odysseus,
going myself in person; and he whom I visit will be bitter.
Still, these are things we shall deliberate again hereafter.
Come, now, we must haul a black ship down to the bright sea,
and assemble rowers enough for it, and put on board it
the hecatomb, and the girl herself, Chryseis of the fair cheeks,
and let there be one responsible man in charge of her,
either Aias or Idomeneus or brilliant Odysseus,
or you yourself, son of Peleus, most terrifying of all men,
to reconcile by accomplishing sacrifice the archer.'
Then looking darkly at him Achilleus of the swift feet spoke:
'O wrapped in shamelessness, with your mind forever on profit,
how shall any one of the Achaians readily obey you
either to go on a journey or to fight men strongly in battle?
I for my part did not come here for the sake of the Trojan

spearmen to fight against them, since to me they have done nothing.
Never yet have they driven away my cattle or my horses,
never in Phthia where the soil is rich and men grow great did they
spoil my harvest, since indeed there is much that lies between us,
the shadowy mountains and the echoing sea; but for your sake,
o great shamelessness, we followed, to do you favour,
you with the dog's eyes, to win your honour and Menelaos'
from the Trojans. You forget all this or else you care nothing.
And now my prize you threaten in person to strip from me,
for whom I laboured much, the gift of the sons of the Achaians.
Never, when the Achaians sack some well-founded citadel
of the Trojans, do I have a prize that is equal to your prize.
Always the greater part of the painful fighting is the work of
my hands; but when the time comes to distribute the booty
yours is far the greater reward, and I with some small thing
yet dear to me go back to my ships when I am weary with fighting.
Now I am returning to Phthia, since it is much better
to go home again with my curved ships, and I am minded no longer
to stay here dishonoured and pile up your wealth and your luxury.'
Then answered him in turn the lord of men Agamemnon:
'Run away by all means if your heart drives you. I will not
entreat you to stay here for my sake. There are others with me
who will do me honour, and above all Zeus of the counsels.
To me you are the most hateful of all the kings whom the gods love.
Forever quarrelling is dear to your heart, and wars and battles;
and if you are very strong indeed, that is a god's gift.
Go home then with your own ships and your own companions,
be king over the Myrmidons. I care nothing about you.
I take no account of your anger. But here is my threat to you.
Even as Phoibos Apollo is taking away my Chryseis.
I shall convey her back in my own ship, with my own
followers; but I shall take the fair-cheeked Briseis,
your prize, I myself going to your shelter, that you may learn well
how much greater I am than you, and another man may shrink back
from likening himself to me and contending against me.'
So he spoke. And the anger came on Peleus' son, and within
his shaggy breast the heart was divided two ways, pondering
whether to draw from beside his thigh the sharp sword, driving
away all those who stood between and kill the son of Atreus,
or else to check the spleen within and keep down his anger.
Now as he weighed in mind and spirit these two courses
and was drawing from its scabbard the great sword, Athene descended
from the sky. For Hera the goddess of the white arms sent her,
who loved both men equally in her heart and cared for them.
The goddess standing behind Peleus' son caught him by the fair hair,
appearing to him only, for no man of the others saw her.
Achilleus in amazement turned about, and straightway
knew Pallas Athene and the terrible eyes shining.
He uttered winged words and addressed her: 'Why have you come now,
o child of Zeus of the aegis, once more? Is it that you may see
the outrageousness of the son of Atreus Agamemnon?
Yet will I tell you this thing, and I think it shall be accomplished.
By such acts of arrogance he may even lose his own life.'

Then in answer the goddess grey-eyed Athene spoke to him:
'I have come down to stay your anger – but will you obey me? –
from the sky; and the goddess of the white arms Hera sent me,
who loves both of you equally in her heart and cares for you.
Come then, do not take your sword in your hand, keep clear of fighting,
though indeed with words you may abuse him, and it will be that way.
And this also will I tell you and it will be a thing accomplished.
Some day three times over such shining gifts shall be given you
by reason of this outrage. Hold your hand then, and obey us.'
Then in answer again spoke Achilleus of the swift feet:
'Goddess, it is necessary that I obey the word of you two,
angry though I am in my heart. So it will be better.
If any man obeys the gods, they listen to him also.'
He spoke, and laid his heavy hand on the silver sword hilt
and thrust the great blade back into the scabbard nor disobeyed
the word of Athene. And she went back again to Olympos
to the house of Zeus of the aegis with the other divinities.
But Peleus' son once again in words of derision
spoke to Atreides, and did not yet let go of his anger:
'You wine sack, with a dog's eyes, with a deer's heart. Never
once have you taken courage in your heart to arm with your people
for battle, or go into ambuscade with the best of the Achaians.
No, for in such things you see death. Far better to your mind
is it, all along the widespread host of the Achaians
to take away the gifts of any man who speaks up against you.
King who feed on your people, since you rule nonentities;
otherwise, son of Atreus, this were your last outrage.
But I will tell you this and swear a great oath upon it:
in the name of this sceptre, which never again will bear leaf nor
branch, now that it has left behind the cut stump in the mountains,
nor shall it ever blossom again, since the bronze blade stripped
bark and leafage, and now at last the sons of the Achaians
carry it in their hands in state when they administer
the justice of Zeus. And this shall be a great oath before you:
some day longing for Achilleus will come to the sons of the Achaians,
all of them. Then stricken at heart though you be, you will be able
to do nothing, when in their numbers before man-slaughtering Hektor
they drop and die. And then you will eat out the heart within you
in sorrow, that you did no honour to the best of the Achaians.'
Thus spoke Peleus' son and dashed to the ground the sceptre
studded with golden nails, and sat down again. But Atreides
raged still on the other side, and between them Nestor
the fair-spoken rose up, the lucid speaker of Pylos,
from whose lips the streams of words ran sweeter than honey.
In his time two generations of mortal men had perished,
those who had grown up with him and they who had been born to
these in sacred Pylos, and he was king in the third age.
He in kind intention toward both stood forth and addressed them:
'Oh, for shame. Great sorrow comes on the land of Achaia.
Now might Priam and the sons of Priam in truth be happy,
and all the rest of the Trojans be visited in their hearts with gladness,
were they to hear all this wherein you two are quarrelling,
you, who surpass all Danaans in council, in fighting.

Yet be persuaded. Both of you are younger than I am.
Yes, and in my time I have dealt with better men than
you are, and never once did they disregard me. Never
yet have I seen nor shall see again such men as these were,
men like Peirithoös, and Dryas, shepherd of the people,
Kaineus and Exadios, godlike Polyphemos,
or Theseus, Aigeus' son, in the likeness of the immortals.
These were the strongest generation of earth-born mortals,
the strongest, and they fought against the strongest, the beast men
living within the mountains, and terribly they destroyed them.
I was of the company of these men, coming from Pylos,
a long way from a distant land, since they had summoned me.
And I fought single-handed, yet against such men no one
of the mortals now alive upon earth could do battle. And also
these listened to the counsels I gave and heeded my bidding.
Do you also obey, since to be persuaded is better.
You, great man that you are, yet do not take the girl away
but let her be, a prize as the sons of the Achaians gave her
first. Nor, son of Peleus, think to match your strength with
the king, since never equal with the rest is the portion of honour
of the sceptred king to whom Zeus gives magnificence. Even
though you are the stronger man, and the mother who bore you was
immortal,
yet is this man greater who is lord over more than you rule.
Son of Atreus, give up your anger; even I entreat you
to give over your bitterness against Achilleus, he who
stands as a great bulwark of battle over all the Achaians.'
Then in answer again spoke powerful Agamemnon:
'Yes, old sir, all this you have said is fair and orderly.
Yet here is a man who wishes to be above all others,
who wishes to hold power over all, and to be lord of
all, and give them their orders, yet I think one will not obey him.
And if the everlasting gods have made him a spearman,
yet they have not given him the right to speak abusively.'
Then looking at him darkly brilliant Achilleus answered him:
'So must I be called of no account and a coward
if I must carry out every order you may happen to give me.
Tell other men to do these things, but give me no more
commands, since I for my part have no intention to obey you.
And put away in your thoughts this other thing I tell you.
With my hands I will not fight for the girl's sake, neither
with you nor any other man, since you take her away who gave her.
But of all the other things that are mine beside my fast black
ship, you shall take nothing away against my pleasure.
Come, then, only try it, that these others may see also;
instantly your own black blood will stain my spearpoint.'
So these two after battling in words of contention
stood up, and broke the assembly beside the ships of the Achaians.
Peleus' son went back to his balanced ships and his shelter
with Patroklos, Menoitios' son, and his own companions.
But the son of Atreus drew a fast ship down to the water
and allotted into it twenty rowers and put on board it
the hecatomb for the god and Chryseis of the fair cheeks

leading her by the hand. And in charge went crafty Odysseus.
These then putting out went over the ways of the water
while Atreus' son told his people to wash off their defilement.
And they washed it away and threw the washings into the salt sea.
Then they accomplished perfect hecatombs to Apollo,
of bulls and goats along the beach of the barren salt sea.
The savour of the burning swept in circles up to the bright sky.
Thus these were busy about the army. But Agamemnon
did not give up his anger and the first threat he made to Achilleus,
but to Talthybios he gave his orders and Eurybates
who were heralds and hard-working henchmen to him: 'Go now
to the shelter of Peleus' son Achilleus, to bring back
Briseis of the fair cheeks leading her by the hand. And if he
will not give her, I must come in person to take her
with many men behind me, and it will be the worse for him.'
He spoke and sent them forth with this strong order upon them.
They went against their will beside the beach of the barren
salt sea, and came to the shelters and the ships of the Myrmidons.
The man himself they found beside his shelter and his black ship
sitting. And Achilleus took no joy at all when he saw them.
These two terrified and in awe of the king stood waiting
quietly, and did not speak a word at all nor question him.
But he knew the whole matter in his own heart, and spoke first:
'Welcome, heralds, messengers of Zeus and of mortals.
Draw near. You are not to blame in my sight, but Agamemnon
who sent the two of you here for the sake of the girl Briseis.
Go then, illustrious Patroklos, and bring the girl forth
and give her to these to be taken away. Yet let them be witnesses
in the sight of the blessed gods, in the sight of mortal
men, and of this cruel king, if ever hereafter
there shall be need of me to beat back the shameful destruction
from the rest. For surely in ruinous heart he makes sacrifice
and has not wit enough to look behind and before him
that the Achaians fighting beside their ships shall not perish.'
So he spoke, and Patroklos obeyed his beloved companion.
He led forth from the hut Briseis of the fair cheeks and gave her
to be taken away; and they walked back beside the ships of the Achaians,
and the woman all unwilling went with them still. But Achilleus
weeping went and sat in sorrow apart from his companions
beside the beach of the grey sea looking out on the infinite water.
Many times stretching forth his hands he called on his mother:
'Since, my mother, you bore me to be a man with a short life,
therefore Zeus of the loud thunder on Olympos should grant me
honour at least. But now he has given me not even a little.
Now the son of Atreus, powerful Agamemnon,
has dishonoured me, since he has taken away my prize and keeps it.'
So he spoke in tears and the lady his mother heard him
as she sat in the depths of the sea at the side of her aged father,
and lightly she emerged like a mist from the grey water.
She came and sat beside him as he wept, and stroked him
with her hand and called him by name and spoke to him: 'Why then,
child, do you lament? What sorrow has come to your heart now?
Tell me, do not hide it in your mind, and thus we shall both know.'

Sighing heavily Achilleus of the swift feet answered her:
'You know; since you know why must I tell you all this?
We went against Thebe, the sacred city of Eëtion,
and the city we sacked, and carried everything back to this place,
and the sons of the Achaians made a fair distribution
and for Atreus' son they chose out Chryseis of the fair cheeks.
Then Chryses, priest of him who strikes from afar, Apollo,
came beside the fast ships of the bronze-armoured Achaians to ransom
back his daughter, carrying gifts beyond count and holding
in his hands wound on a staff of gold the ribbons of Apollo
who strikes from afar, and supplicated all the Achaians,
but above all Atreus' two sons, the marshals of the people.
Then all the rest of the Achaians cried out in favour
that the priest be respected and the shining ransom be taken;
yet this pleased not the heart of Atreus' son Agamemnon,
but harshly he sent him away with a strong order upon him.
The old man went back again in anger, but Apollo
listened to his prayer, since he was very dear to him, and let go
the wicked arrow against the Argives. And now the people
were dying one after another while the god's shafts ranged
everywhere along the wide host of the Achaians, till the seer
knowing well the truth interpreted the designs of the archer.
It was I first of all urged then the god's appeasement;
and the anger took hold of Atreus' son, and in speed standing
he uttered his threat against me, and now it is a thing accomplished.
For the girl the glancing-eyed Achaians are taking to Chryse
in a fast ship, also carrying to the king presents. But even
now the heralds went away from my shelter leading
Briseus' daughter, whom the sons of the Achaians gave me.
You then, if you have power to, protect your own son, going
to Olympos and supplicating Zeus, if ever before now
either by word you comforted Zeus' heart or by action.
Since it is many times in my father's halls I have heard you
making claims, when you said you only among the immortals
beat aside shameful destruction from Kronos' son the dark-misted,
that time when all the other Olympians sought to bind him,
Hera and Poseidon and Pallas Athene. Then you,
goddess, went and set him free from his shackles, summoning
in speed the creature of the hundred hands to tall Olympos,
that creature the gods name Briareus, but all men
Aigaios' son, but he is far greater in strength than his father.
He rejoicing in the glory of it sat down by Kronion,
and the rest of the blessed gods were frightened and gave up binding him.
Sit beside him and take his knees and remind him of these things
now, if perhaps he might be willing to help the Trojans,
and pin the Achaians back against the ships and the water,
dying, so that thus they may all have profit of their own king,
that Atreus' son wide-ruling Agamemnon may recognize
his madness, that he did no honour to the best of the Achaians.'
Thetis answered him then letting the tears fall: 'Ah me,
my child. Your birth was bitterness. Why did I raise you?
If only you could sit by your ships untroubled, not weeping,
since indeed your lifetime is to be short, of no length.

Now it has befallen that your life must be brief and bitter
beyond all men's. To a bad destiny I bore you in my chambers.
But I will go to cloud-dark Olympos and ask this
thing of Zeus who delights in the thunder. Perhaps he will do it.
Do you therefore continuing to sit by your swift ships
be angry at the Achaians and stay away from all fighting.
For Zeus went to the blameless Aithiopians at the Ocean
yesterday to feast, and the rest of the gods went with him.
On the twelfth day he will be coming back to Olympos,
and then I will go for your sake to the house of Zeus, bronze-founded,
and take him by the knees and I think I can persuade him.'
So speaking she went away from that place and left him
sorrowing in his heart for the sake of the fair-girdled woman
whom they were taking by force against his will. But Odysseus
meanwhile drew near to Chryse conveying the sacred hecatomb.
These when they were inside the many-hollowed harbour
took down and gathered together the sails and stowed them in the black ship,
let down mast by the forestays, and settled it into the mast crutch
easily, and rowed her in with oars to the mooring.
They threw over the anchor stones and made fast the stern cables
and themselves stepped out on to the break of the sea beach,
and led forth the hecatomb to the archer Apollo,
and Chryseis herself stepped forth from the sea-going vessel.
Odysseus of the many designs guided her to the altar
and left her in her father's arms and spoke a word to him:
'Chryses, I was sent here by the lord of men Agamemnon
to lead back your daughter and accomplish a sacred hecatomb
to Apollo on behalf of the Danaans, that we may propitiate
the lord who has heaped unhappiness and tears on the Argives.'
He spoke, and left her in his arms. And he received gladly
his beloved child. And the men arranged the sacred hecatomb
for the god in orderly fashion around the strong-founded altar.
Next they washed their hands and took up the scattering barley.
Standing among them with lifted arms Chryses prayed in a great voice:
'Hear me, lord of the silver bow, who set your power about
Chryse and Killa the sacrosanct, who are lord in strength over
Tenedos; if once before you listened to my prayers
and did me honour and smote strongly the host of the Achaians,
so one more time bring to pass the wish that I pray for.
Beat aside at last the shameful plague from the Danaans.'
So he spoke in prayer, and Phoibos Apollo heard him.
And when all had made prayer and flung down the scattering barley
first they drew back the victims' heads and slaughtered them and skinned
them,
and cut away the meat from the thighs and wrapped them in fat,
making a double fold, and laid shreds of flesh upon them.
The old man burned these on a cleft stick and poured the gleaming
wine over, while the young men with forks in their hands stood about him.
But when they had burned the thigh pieces and tasted the vitals,
they cut all the remainder into pieces and spitted them
and roasted all carefully and took off the pieces.
Then after they had finished the work and got the feast ready
they feasted, nor was any man's hunger denied a fair portion.

But when they had put away their desire for eating and drinking,
the young men filled the mixing bowls with pure wine, passing
a portion to all, when they had offered drink in the goblets.
All day long they propitiated the god with singing,
chanting a splendid hymn to Apollo, these young Achaians,
singing to the one who works from afar, who listened in gladness.
Afterwards when the sun went down and darkness came onward
they lay down and slept beside the ship's stern cables.
But when the young Dawn showed again with her rosy fingers,
they put forth to sea toward the wide camp of the Achaians.
And Apollo who works from afar sent them a favouring stern wind.
They set up the mast again and spread on it the white sails,
and the wind blew into the middle of the sail, and at the cutwater
a blue wave rose and sang strongly as the ship went onward.
She ran swiftly cutting across the swell her pathway.
But when they had come back to the wide camp of the Achaians
they hauled the black ship up on the mainland, high up
on the sand, and underneath her they fixed the long props.
Afterwards they scattered to their own ships and their shelters.
But that other still sat in anger beside his swift ships,
Peleus' son divinely born, Achilleus of the swift feet.
Never now would he go to assemblies where men win glory,
never more into battle, but continued to waste his heart out
sitting there, though he longed always for the clamour and fighting.
But when the twelfth dawn after this day appeared, the gods who
live forever came back to Olympos all in a body
and Zeus led them; nor did Thetis forget the entreaties
of her son, but she emerged from the sea's waves early
in the morning and went up to the tall sky and Olympos.
She found Kronos' broad-browed son apart from the others
sitting upon the highest peak of rugged Olympos.
She came and sat beside him with her left hand embracing
his knees, but took him underneath the chin with her right hand
and spoke in supplication to lord Zeus son of Kronos:
'Father Zeus, if ever before in word or action
I did you favour among the immortals, now grant what I ask for.
Now give honour to my son short-lived beyond all other
mortals. Since even now the lord of men Agamemnon
dishonours him, who has taken away his prize and keeps it.
Zeus of the counsels, lord of Olympos, now do him honour.
So long put strength into the Trojans, until the Achaians
give my son his rights, and his honour is increased among them.'
She spoke thus. But Zeus who gathers the clouds made no answer
but sat in silence a long time. And Thetis, as she had taken
his knees, clung fast to them and urged once more her question:
'Bend your head and promise me to accomplish this thing,
or else refuse it, you have nothing to fear, that I may know
by how much I am the most dishonoured of all gods.'
Deeply disturbed Zeus who gathers the clouds answered her:
'This is a disastrous matter when you set me in conflict
with Hera, and she troubles me with recriminations.
Since even as things are, forever among the immortals
she is at me and speaks of how I help the Trojans in battle.

Even so, go back again now, go away, for fear she
see us. I will look to these things that they be accomplished.
See then, I will bend my head that you may believe me.
For this among the immortal gods is the mightiest witness
I can give, and nothing I do shall be vain nor revocable
nor a thing unfulfilled when I bend my head in assent to it.'
He spoke, the son of Kronos, and nodded his head with the dark brows,
and the immortally anointed hair of the great god
swept from his divine head, and all Olympos was shaken.
So these two who had made their plans separated, and Thetis
leapt down again from shining Olympos into the sea's depth,
but Zeus went back to his own house, and all the gods rose up
from their chairs to greet the coming of their father, not one had courage
to keep his place as the father advanced, but stood up to greet him.
Thus he took his place on the throne; yet Hera was not
ignorant, having seen how he had been plotting counsels
with Thetis the silver-footed, the daughter of the sea's ancient,
and at once she spoke revilingly to Zeus son of Kronos:
'Treacherous one, what god has been plotting counsels with you?
Always it is dear to your heart in my absence to think of
secret things and decide upon them. Never have you patience
frankly to speak forth to me the thing that you purpose.'
Then to her the father of gods and men made answer:
'Hera, do not go on hoping that you will hear all my
thoughts, since these will be too hard for you, though you are my wife.
Any thought that it is right for you to listen to, no one
neither man nor any immortal shall hear it before you.
But anything that apart from the rest of the gods I wish to
plan, do not always question each detail nor probe me.'
Then the goddess the ox-eyed lady Hera answered:
'Majesty, son of Kronos, what sort of thing have you spoken?
Truly too much in time past I have not questioned nor probed you,
but you are entirely free to think out whatever pleases you.
Now, though, I am terribly afraid you were won over
by Thetis the silver-footed, the daughter of the sea's ancient.
For early in the morning she sat beside you and took your
knees, and I think you bowed your head in assent to do honour
to Achilleus, and to destroy many beside the ships of the Achaians.'
Then in return Zeus who gathers the clouds made answer:
'Dear lady, I never escape you, you are always full of suspicion.
Yet thus you can accomplish nothing surely, but be more
distant from my heart than ever, and it will be the worse for you.
If what you say is true, then that is the way I wish it.
But go then, sit down in silence, and do as I tell you,
for fear all the gods, as many as are on Olympos, can do nothing
if I come close and lay my unconquerable hands upon you.'
He spoke, and the goddess the ox-eyed lady Hera was frightened
and went and sat down in silence wrenching her heart to obedience,
and all the Uranian gods in the house of Zeus were troubled.
Hephaistos the renowned smith rose up to speak among them,
to bring comfort to his beloved mother, Hera of the white arms:
'This will be a disastrous matter and not endurable
if you two are to quarrel thus for the sake of mortals

and bring brawling among the gods. There will be no pleasure
in the stately feast at all, since vile things will be uppermost.
And I entreat my mother, though she herself understands it,
to be ingratiating toward our father Zeus, that no longer
our father may scold her and break up the quiet of our feasting.
For if the Olympian who handles the lightning should be minded
to hurl us out of our places, he is far too strong for any.
Do you therefore approach him again with words made gentle,
and at once the Olympian will be gracious again to us.'
He spoke, and springing to his feet put a two-handled goblet
into his mother's hands and spoke again to her once more:
'Have patience, my mother, and endure it, though you be saddened,
for fear that, dear as you are, I see you before my own eyes
struck down, and then sorry though I be I shall not be able
to do anything. It is too hard to fight against the Olympian.
There was a time once before now I was minded to help you,
and he caught me by the foot and threw me from the magic threshold,
and all day long I dropped helpless, and about sunset
I landed in Lemnos, and there was not much life left in me.
After that fall it was the Sintian men who took care of me.'
He spoke, and the goddess of the white arms Hera smiled at him,
and smiling she accepted the goblet out of her son's hand.
Thereafter beginning from the left he poured drinks for the other
gods, dipping up from the mixing bowl the sweet nectar.
But among the blessed immortals uncontrollable laughter
went up as they saw Hephaistos bustling about the palace.
Thus thereafter the whole day long until the sun went under
they feasted, nor was anyone's hunger denied a fair portion,
nor denied the beautifully wrought lyre in the hands of Apollo
nor the antiphonal sweet sound of the Muses singing.
Afterwards when the light of the flaming sun went under
they went away each one to sleep in his home where
for each one the far-renowned strong-handed Hephaistos
had built a house by means of his craftsmanship and cunning.
Zeus the Olympian and lord of the lightning went to
his own bed, where always he lay when sweet sleep came on him.
Going up to the bed he slept and Hera of the gold throne beside him.

Reading 1.2 Homer, *The Iliad*, 2.211–77

(Source: Lattimore, R. (trans.) (1961) *The Iliad of Homer*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, pp. 81–3)

Now the rest had sat down, and were orderly in their places,
but one man, Thersites of the endless speech, still scolded,
who knew within his head many words, but disorderly;
vain, and without decency, to quarrel with the princes
with any word he thought might be amusing to the Argives.
This was the ugliest man who came beneath Ilion. He was
bandy-legged and went lame of one foot, with shoulders
stooped and drawn together over his chest, and above this
his skull went up to a point with the wool grown sparsely upon it.

Beyond all others Achilleus hated him, and Odysseus.
These two he was forever abusing, but now at brilliant
Agamemnon he clashed the shrill noise of his abuse. The Achaians
were furiously angry with him, their minds resentful.
But he, crying the words aloud, scolded Agamemnon:
'Son of Atreus, what thing further do you want, or find fault with
now? Your shelters are filled with bronze, there are plenty of the choicest
women for you within your shelter, whom we Achaians
give to you first of all whenever we capture some stronghold.
Or is it still more gold you will be wanting, that some son
of the Trojans, breakers of horses, brings as ransom out of Ilion,
one that I, or some other Achaian, capture and bring in?
Is it some young woman to lie with in love and keep her
all to yourself apart from the others? It is not right for
you, their leader, to lead in sorrow the sons of the Achaians.
My good fools, poor abuses, you women, not men, of Achaia,
let us go back home in our ships, and leave this man here
by himself in Troy to mull his prizes of honour
that he may find out whether or not we others are helping him.
And now he has dishonoured Achilleus, a man much better
than he is. He has taken his prize by force and keeps her.
But there is no gall in Achilleus' heart, and he is forgiving.
Otherwise, son of Atreus, this were your last outrage.'
So he spoke, Thersites, abusing Agamemnon
the shepherd of the people. But brilliant Odysseus swiftly
came beside him scowling and laid a harsh word upon him:
'Fluent orator though you be, Thersites, your words are
ill-considered. Stop, nor stand up alone against princes.
Out of all those who came beneath Ilion with Atreides
I assert there is no worse man than you are. Therefore
you shall not lift up your mouth to argue with princes,
cast reproaches into their teeth, nor sustain the homegoing.
We do not even know clearly how these things will be accomplished,
whether we sons of the Achaians shall win home well or badly;
yet you sit here throwing abuse at Agamemnon,
Atreus' son, the shepherd of the people, because the Danaan
fighters give him much. You argue nothing but scandal.
And this also will I tell you, and it will be a thing accomplished.
If once more I find you playing the fool, as you are now,
nevermore let the head of Odysseus sit on his shoulders,
let me nevermore be called Telemachos' father,
if I do not take you and strip away your personal clothing,
your mantle and your tunic that cover over your nakedness,
and send you thus bare and howling back to the fast ships,
whipping you out of the assembly place with the strokes of indignity.'
So he spoke and dashed the sceptre against his back and
shoulders, and he doubled over, and a round tear dropped from him,
and a bloody welt stood up between his shoulders under
the golden sceptre's stroke, and he sat down again, frightened,
in pain, and looking helplessly about wiped off the tear-drops.
Sorry though the men were they laughed over him happily,
and thus they would speak to each other, each looking at the man next him:
'Come now: Odysseus has done excellent things by thousands,

bringing forward good counsels and ordering armed encounters;
but now this is far the best thing he ever has accomplished
among the Argives, to keep this thrower of words, this braggart
out of assembly. Never again will his proud heart stir him
up, to wrangle with the princes in words of revilement.'

Reading 1.3 Homer, *The Iliad*, Book 22

(Source: Lattimore, R. (trans.) (1961) *The Iliad of Homer*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, pp. 435–49)

So along the city the Trojans, who had run like fawns, dried
the sweat off from their bodies and drank and slaked their thirst, leaning
along the magnificent battlements. Meanwhile the Achaians
sloping their shields across their shoulders came close to the rampart.
But his deadly fate held Hektor shackled, so that he stood fast
in front of Ilion and the Skaian gates. Now Phoibos
Apollo spoke aloud to Peleion: 'Why, son of Peleus,
do you keep after me in the speed of your feet, being mortal
while I am an immortal god? Even yet you have not
seen that I am a god, but strain after me in your fury.
Now hard fighting with the Trojans whom you stampeded means nothing
to you. They are crowded in the city, but you bent away here.
You will never kill me. I am not one who is fated.'
Deeply vexed Achilleus of the swift feet spoke to him:
'You have balked me, striker from afar, most malignant of all gods,
when you turned me here away from the rampart, else many Trojans
would have caught the soil in their teeth before they got back into Ilion.
Now you have robbed me of great glory, and rescued these people
lightly, since you have no retribution to fear hereafter.
Else I would punish you, if only the strength were in me.'
He spoke, and stalked away against the city, with high thoughts
in mind, and in tearing speed, like a racehorse with his chariot
who runs lightly as he pulls the chariot over the flat land.
Such was the action of Achilleus in feet and quick knees.
The aged Priam was the first of all whose eyes saw him
as he swept across the flat land in full shining, like that star
which comes on in the autumn and whose conspicuous brightness
far outshines the stars that are numbered in the night's darkening,
the star they give the name of Orion's Dog, which is brightest
among the stars, and yet is wrought as a sign of evil
and brings on the great fever for unfortunate mortals.
Such was the flare of the bronze that girt his chest in his running.
The old man groaned aloud and with both hands high uplifted
beat his head, and groaned amain, and spoke supplicating
his beloved son, who there still in front of the gateway
stood fast in determined fury to fight with Achilleus.
The old man stretching his hands out called pitifully to him:
'Hektor, beloved child, do not wait the attack of this man
alone, away from the others. You might encounter your destiny
beaten down by Peleion, since he is far stronger than you are.
A hard man: I wish he were as beloved of the immortal
as loved by me. Soon he would lie dead, and the dogs and the vultures
would eat him, and bitter sorrow so be taken from my heart.

He has made me desolate of my sons, who were brave and many.
He killed them, or sold them away among the far-lying islands.
Even now there are two sons, Lykaon and Polydoros,
whom I cannot see among the Trojans pent up in the city,
sons Laothoë a princess among women bore to me.
But if these are alive somewhere in the army, then I can
set them free for bronze and gold; it is there inside, since
Altes the aged and renowned gave much with his daughter.
But if they are dead already and gone down to the house of Hades,
it is sorrow to our hearts, who bore them, myself and their mother,
but to the rest of the people a sorrow that will be fleeting
beside their sorrow for you, if you go down before Achilleus.
Come then inside the wall, my child, so that you can rescue
the Trojans and the women of Troy, neither win the high glory
for Peleus' son, and yourself be robbed of your very life. Oh, take
pity on me, the unfortunate still alive, still sentient
but ill-starred, whom the father, Kronos' son, on the threshold of old age
will blast with hard fate, after I have looked upon evils
and seen my sons destroyed and my daughters dragged away captive
and the chambers of marriage wrecked and the innocent children taken
and dashed to the ground in the hatefulness of war, and the wives
of my sons dragged off by the accursed hands of the Achaians.
And myself last of all, my dogs in front of my doorway
will rip me raw, after some man with stroke of the sharp bronze
spear, or with spearcast, has torn the life out of my body;
those dogs I raised in my halls to be at my table, to guard my
gates, who will lap my blood in the savagery of their anger
and then lie down in my courts. For a young man all is decorous
when he is cut down in battle and torn with the sharp bronze, and lies there
dead, and though dead still all that shows about him is beautiful;
but when an old man is dead and down, and the dogs mutilate
the grey head and the grey beard and the parts that are secret,
this, for all sad mortality, is the sight most pitiful.'

So the old man spoke, and in his hands seizing the grey hairs
tore them from his head, but could not move the spirit in Hektor.
And side by side with him his mother in tears was mourning
and laid the fold of her bosom bare and with one hand held out
a breast, and wept her tears for him and called to him in winged words:
'Hektor, my child, look upon these and obey, and take pity
on me, if ever I gave you the breast to quiet your sorrow.
Remember all these things, dear child, and from inside the wall
beat off this grim man. Do not go out as champion against him,
o hard one; for if he kills you I can no longer
mourn you on the death-bed, sweet branch, o child of my bearing,
nor can your generous wife mourn you, but a big way from us
beside the ships of the Argives the running dogs will feed on you.'

So these two in tears and with much supplication called out
to their dear son, but could not move the spirit in Hektor,
but he awaited Achilleus as he came on, gigantic.
But as a snake waits for a man by his hole, in the mountains,
glutted with evil poisons, and the fell venom has got inside him,
and coiled about the hole he stares malignant, so Hektor
would not give ground but kept unquenched the fury within him

and sloped his shining shield against the jut of the bastion.
Deeply troubled he spoke to his own great-hearted spirit:
'Ah me! If I go now inside the wall and the gateway,
Poulydamas will be first to put a reproach upon me,
since he tried to make me lead the Trojans inside the city
on that accursed night when brilliant Achilleus rose up,
and I would not obey him, but that would have been far better.
Now, since by my own recklessness I have ruined my people,
I feel shame before the Trojans and the Trojan women with trailing
robes, that someone who is less of a man than I will say of me:
"Hektor believed in his own strength and ruined his people."
Thus they will speak; and as for me, it would be much better
at that time, to go against Achilleus, and slay him, and come back,
or else be killed by him in glory in front of the city.
Or if again I set down my shield massive in the middle
and my ponderous helm, and lean my spear up against the rampart
and go out as I am to meet Achilleus the blameless
and promise to give back Helen, and with her all her possessions,
all those things that once in the hollow ships Alexandros
brought back to Troy, and these were the beginning of the quarrel;
to give these to Atreus' sons to take away, and for the Achaians
also to divide up all that is hidden within the city,
and take an oath thereafter for the Trojans in conclave
not to hide anything away, but distribute all of it,
as much as the lovely citadel keeps guarded within it;
yet still, why does the heart within me debate on these things?
I might go up to him, and he take no pity upon me
nor respect my position, but kill me naked so, as if I were
a woman, once I stripped my armour from me. There is no
way any more from a tree or a rock to talk to him gently
whispering like a young man and a young girl, in the way
a young man and a young maiden whisper together.
Better to bring on the fight with him as soon as it may be.
We shall see to which one the Olympian grants the glory.'
So he pondered, waiting, but Achilleus was closing upon him
in the likeness of the lord of battles, the helm-shining warrior,
and shaking from above his shoulder the dangerous Pelian
ash spear, while the bronze that closed about him was shining
like the flare of blazing fire or the sun in its rising.
And the shivers took hold of Hektor when he saw him, and he could no longer
stand his ground there, but left the gates behind, and fled, frightened,
and Peleus' son went after him in the confidence of his quick feet.
As when a hawk in the mountains who moves lightest of things flying
makes his effortless swoop for a trembling dove, but she slips away
from beneath and flies and he shrill screaming close after her
plunges for her again and again, heart furious to take her;
so Achilleus went straight for him in fury, but Hektor
fled away under the Trojan wall and moved his knees rapidly.
They raced along by the watching point and the windy fig tree
always away from under the wall and along the wagon-way
and came to the two sweet-running well springs. There there are double
springs of water that jet up, the springs of whirling Skamandros.
One of these runs hot water and the steam on all sides

of it rises as if from a fire that was burning inside it.
But the other in the summer-time runs water that is like hail
or chill snow or ice that forms from water. Beside these
in this place, and close to them, are the washing-hollows
of stone, and magnificent, where the wives of the Trojans and their lovely
daughters washed the clothes to shining, in the old days
when there was peace, before the coming of the sons of the Achaians.
They ran beside these, one escaping, the other after him.
It was a great man who fled, but far better he who pursued him
rapidly, since here was no festal beast, no ox-hide
they strove for, for these are prizes that are given men for their running.
No, they ran for the life of Hektor, breaker of horses.
As when about the turnposts racing single-foot horses
run at full speed, when a great prize is laid up for their winning,
a tripod or a woman, in games for a man's funeral,
so these two swept whirling about the city of Priam
in the speed of their feet, while all the gods were looking upon them.
First to speak among them was the father of gods and mortals:
'Ah me, this is a man beloved whom now my eyes watch
being chased around the wall; my heart is mourning for Hektor
who has burned in my honour many thigh pieces of oxen
on the peaks of Ida with all her folds, or again on the uttermost
part of the citadel, but now the brilliant Achilleus
drives him in speed of his feet around the city of Priam.
Come then, you immortals, take thought and take counsel, whether
to rescue this man or whether to make him, for all his valour,
go down under the hands of Achilleus, the son of Peleus.'
Then in answer the goddess grey-eyed Athene spoke to him:
'Father of the shining bolt, dark misted, what is this you said?
Do you wish to bring back a man who is mortal, one long since
doomed by his destiny, from ill-sounding death and release him?
Do it, then; but not all the rest of us gods shall approve you.'
Then Zeus the gatherer of the clouds spoke to her in answer:
'Tritogeneia, dear daughter, do not lose heart; for I say this
not in outright anger, and my meaning toward you is kindly.
Act as your purpose would have you do, and hold back no longer.'
So he spoke, and stirred on Athene, who was eager before this,
and she went in a flash of speed down the pinnacles of Olympos.
But swift Achilleus kept unremittingly after Hektor,
chasing him, as a dog in the mountains who has flushed from his covert
a deer's fawn follows him through the folding ways and the valleys,
and though the fawn crouched down under a bush and be hidden
he keeps running and noses him out until he comes on him;
so Hektor could not lose himself from swift-footed Peleion.
If ever he made a dash right on for the gates of Dardanos
to get quickly under the strong-built bastions, endeavouring
that they from above with missiles thrown might somehow defend him,
each time Achilleus would get in front and force him to turn back
into the plain, and himself kept his flying course next the city.
As in a dream a man is not able to follow one who runs
from him, nor can the runner escape, nor the other pursue him,
so he could not run him down in his speed, nor the other get clear.
How then could Hektor have escaped the death spirits, had not

Apollo, for this last and uttermost time, stood by him
close, and driven strength into him, and made his knees light?
But brilliant Achilleus kept shaking his head at his own people
and would not let them throw their bitter projectiles at Hektor
for fear the thrower might win the glory, and himself come second.
But when for the fourth time they had come around to the well springs
then the Father balanced his golden scales, and in them
he set two fateful portions of death, which lays men prostrate,
one for Achilleus, and one for Hektor, breaker of horses,
and balanced it by the middle; and Hektor's death-day was heavier
and dragged downward toward death, and Phoibos Apollo forsook him.
But the goddess grey-eyed Athene came now to Peleion
and stood close beside him and addressed him in winged words: 'Beloved
of Zeus, shining Achilleus, I am hopeful now that you and I
will take back great glory to the ships of the Achaians, after
we have killed Hektor, for all his slakeless fury for battle.
Now there is no way for him to get clear away from us,
not though Apollo who strikes from afar should be willing to undergo
much, and wallow before our father Zeus of the aegis.
Stand you here then and get your wind again, while I go
to this man and persuade him to stand up to you in combat.'

So spoke Athene, and he was glad at heart, and obeyed her,
and stopped, and stood leaning on his bronze-barbed ash spear. Meanwhile
Athene left him there, and caught up with brilliant Hektor,
and likened herself in form and weariless voice to Deïphobos.
She came now and stood close to him and addressed him in winged words:
'Dear brother, indeed swift-footed Achilleus is using you roughly
and chasing you on swift feet around the city of Priam.
Come on, then; let us stand fast against him and beat him back from us.'

Then tall Hektor of the shining helm answered her: 'Deïphobos,
before now you were dearest to me by far of my brothers,
of all those who were sons of Priam and Hekabe, and now
I am minded all the more within my heart to honour you,
you who dared for my sake, when your eyes saw me, to come forth
from the fortifications, while the others stand fast inside them.'

Then in turn the goddess grey-eyed Athene answered him:
'My brother, it is true our father and the lady our mother, taking
my knees in turn, and my companions about me, entreated
that I stay within, such was the terror upon all of them.
But the heart within me was worn away by hard sorrow for you.
But now let us go straight on and fight hard, let there be no sparing
of our spears, so that we can find out whether Achilleus
will kill us both and carry our bloody war spoils back
to the hollow ships, or will himself go down under your spear.'

So Athene spoke and led him on by beguilement.
Now as the two in their advance were come close together,
first of the two to speak was tall helm-glittering Hektor:
'Son of Peleus, I will no longer run from you, as before this
I fled three times around the great city of Priam, and dared not
stand to your onfall. But now my spirit in turn has driven me
to stand and face you. I must take you now, or I must be taken.
Come then, shall we swear before the gods? For these are the highest
who shall be witnesses and watch over our agreements.

Brutal as you are I will not defile you, if Zeus grants
to me that I can wear you out, and take the life from you.
But after I have stripped your glorious armour, Achilleus,
I will give your corpse back to the Achaians. Do you do likewise.'
Then looking darkly at him swift-footed Achilleus answered:
'Hektor, argue me no agreements. I cannot forgive you.
As there are no trustworthy oaths between men and lions,
nor wolves and lambs have spirit that can be brought to agreement
but forever these hold feelings of hate for each other,
so there can be no love between you and me, nor shall there be
oaths between us, but one or the other must fall before then
to glut with his blood Ares the god who fights under the shield's guard.
Remember every valour of yours, for now the need comes
hardest upon you to be a spearman and a bold warrior.
There shall be no more escape for you, but Pallas Athene
will kill you soon by my spear. You will pay in a lump for all those
sorrows of my companions you killed in your spear's fury.'
So he spoke, and balanced the spear far shadowed, and threw it;
but glorious Hektor kept his eyes on him, and avoided it,
for he dropped, watchful, to his knee, and the bronze spear flew over his
shoulder
and stuck in the ground, but Pallas Athene snatched it, and gave it
back to Achilleus, unseen by Hektor shepherd of the people.
But now Hektor spoke out to the blameless son of Peleus:
'You missed; and it was not, o Achilleus like the immortals,
from Zeus that you knew my destiny; but you thought so; or rather
you are someone clever in speech and spoke to swindle me,
to make me afraid of you and forget my valour and war strength.
You will not stick your spear in my back as I run away from you
but drive it into my chest as I storm straight in against you;
if the god gives you that; and now look out for my brazen
spear. I wish it might be taken full length in your body.
And indeed the war would be a lighter thing for the Trojans
if you were dead, seeing that you are their greatest affliction.'
So he spoke, and balanced the spear far shadowed, and threw it,
and struck the middle of Peleïdes' shield, nor missed it,
but the spear was driven far back from the shield, and Hektor was angered
because his swift weapon had been loosed from his hand in a vain cast.
He stood discouraged, and had no other ash spear; but lifting
his voice he called aloud on Deïphobos of the pale shield,
and asked him for a long spear, but Deïphobos was not near him.
And Hektor knew the truth inside his heart, and spoke aloud:
'No use. Here at last the gods have summoned me deathward.
I thought Deïphobos the hero was here close beside me,
but he is behind the wall and it was Athene cheating me,
and now evil death is close to me, and no longer far away,
and there is no way out. So it must long since have been pleasing
to Zeus, and Zeus' son who strikes from afar, this way; though before this
they defended me gladly. But now my death is upon me.
Let me at least not die without a struggle, inglorious,
but do some big thing first, that men to come shall know of it.'
So he spoke, and pulling out the sharp sword that was slung
at the hollow of his side, huge and heavy, and gathering

himself together, he made his swoop, like a high-flown eagle
who launches himself out of the murk of the clouds on the flat land
to catch away a tender lamb or a shivering hare; so
Hektor made his swoop, swinging his sharp sword, and Achilleus
charged, the heart within him loaded with savage fury.
In front of his chest the beautiful elaborate great shield
covered him, and with the glittering helm with four horns
he nodded; the lovely golden fringes were shaken about it
which Hephaistos had driven close along the horn of the helmet.
And as a star moves among stars in the night's darkening,
Hesper, who is the fairest star who stands in the sky, such
was the shining from the pointed spear Achilleus was shaking
in his right hand with evil intention toward brilliant Hektor.
He was eyeing Hektor's splendid body, to see where it might best
give way, but all the rest of the skin was held in the armour,
brazen and splendid, he stripped when he cut down the strength of
Patroklos;
yet showed where the collar-bones hold the neck from the shoulders,
the throat, where death of the soul comes most swiftly; in this place
brilliant Achilleus drove the spear as he came on in fury,
and clean through the soft part of the neck the spearpoint was driven.
Yet the ash spear heavy with bronze did not sever the windpipe,
so that Hektor could still make exchange of words spoken.
But he dropped in the dust, and brilliant Achilleus vaunted above him:
'Hektor, surely you thought as you killed Patroklos you would be
safe, and since I was far away you thought nothing of me,
o fool, for an avenger was left, far greater than he was,
behind him and away by the hollow ships. And it was I;
and I have broken your strength; on you the dogs and the vultures
shall feed and foully rip you; the Achaians will bury Patroklos.'
In his weakness Hektor of the shining helm spoke to him:
'I entreat you, by your life, by your knees, by your parents,
do not let the dogs feed on me by the ships of the Achaians,
but take yourself the bronze and gold that are there in abundance,
those gifts that my father and the lady my mother will give you,
and give my body to be taken home again, so that the Trojans
and the wives of the Trojans may give me in death my rite of burning.'
But looking darkly at him swift-footed Achilleus answered:
'No more entreating of me, you dog, by knees or parents.
I wish only that my spirit and fury would drive me
to hack your meat away and eat it raw for the things that
you have done to me. So there is no one who can hold the dogs off
from your head, not if they bring here and set before me ten times
and twenty times the ransom, and promise more in addition,
not if Priam son of Dardanos should offer to weigh out
your bulk in gold; not even so shall the lady your mother
who herself bore you lay you on the death-bed and mourn you:
no, but the dogs and the birds will have you all for their feasting.'
Then, dying, Hektor of the shining helmet spoke to him:
'I know you well as I look upon you, I know that I could not
persuade you, since indeed in your breast is a heart of iron.
Be careful now; for I might be made into the gods' curse
upon you, on that day when Paris and Phoibos Apollo

destroy you in the Skaian gates, for all your valour.'
He spoke, and as he spoke the end of death closed in upon him,
and the soul fluttering free of the limbs went down into Death's house
mourning her destiny, leaving youth and manhood behind her.
Now though he was a dead man brilliant Achilleus spoke to him:
'Die: and I will take my own death at whatever time
Zeus and the rest of the immortals choose to accomplish it.'
He spoke, and pulled the brazen spear from the body, and laid it
on one side, and stripped away from the shoulders the bloody
armour. And the other sons of the Achaians came running about him,
and gazed upon the stature and on the imposing beauty
of Hektor; and none stood beside him who did not stab him;
and thus they would speak one to another, each looking at his neighbour:
'See now, Hektor is much softer to handle than he was
when he set the ships ablaze with the burning firebrand.'
So as they stood beside him they would speak, and stab him.
But now, when he had despoiled the body, swift-footed brilliant
Achilleus stood among the Achaians and addressed them in winged words:
'Friends, who are leaders of the Argives and keep their counsel:
since the gods have granted me the killing of this man
who has done us much damage, such as not all the others together
have done, come, let us go in armour about the city
to see if we can find out what purpose is in the Trojans,
whether they will abandon their high city, now that this man
has fallen, or are minded to stay, though Hektor lives no longer.
Yet still, why does the heart within me debate on these things?
There is a dead man who lies by the ships, unwept, unburied:
Patroklos: and I will not forget him, never so long as
I remain among the living and my knees have their spring beneath me.
And though the dead forget the dead in the house of Hades,
even there I shall still remember my beloved companion.
But now, you young men of the Achaians, let us go back, singing
a victory song, to our hollow ships; and take this with us.
We have won ourselves enormous fame; we have killed the great Hektor
whom the Trojans glorified as if he were a god in their city.'
He spoke, and now thought of shameful treatment for glorious Hektor.
In both of his feet at the back he made holes by the tendons
in the space between ankle and heel, and drew thongs of ox-hide through
them,
and fastened them to the chariot so as to let the head drag,
and mounted the chariot, and lifted the glorious armour inside it,
then whipped the horses to a run, and they winged their way unreluctant.
A cloud of dust rose where Hektor was dragged, his dark hair was falling
about him, and all that head that was once so handsome was tumbled
in the dust; since by this time Zeus had given him over
to his enemies, to be defiled in the land of his fathers.
So all his head was dragged in the dust; and now his mother
tore out her hair, and threw the shining veil far from her
and raised a great wail as she looked upon her son; and his father
beloved groaned pitifully, and all his people about him
were taken with wailing and lamentation all through the city.
It was most like what would have happened, if all lowering
Ilion had been burning top to bottom in fire.

His people could scarcely keep the old man in his impatience
from storming out of the Dardanian gates; he implored them
all, and wallowed in the muck before them calling on each man
and naming him by his name: 'Give way, dear friends,
and let me alone though you care for me, leave me to go out
from the city and make my way to the ships of the Achaians.
I must be suppliant to this man, who is harsh and violent,
and he might have respect for my age and take pity upon it
since I am old, and his father also is old, as I am,
Peleus, who begot and reared him to be an affliction
on the Trojans. He has given us most sorrow, beyond all others,
such is the number of my flowering sons he has cut down.
But for all of these I mourn not so much, in spite of my sorrow,
as for one, Hektor, and the sharp grief for him will carry me downward
into Death's house. I wish he had died in my arms, for that way
we two, I myself and his mother who bore him unhappy,
might so have glutted ourselves with weeping for him and mourning.'
So he spoke, in tears, and beside him mourned the citizens.
But for the women of Troy Hekabe led out the thronging
chant of sorrow: 'Child, I am wretched. What shall my life be
in my sorrows, now you are dead, who by day and in the night
were my glory in the town, and to all of the Trojans
and the women of Troy a blessing throughout their city. They adored you
as if you were a god, since in truth you were their high honour
while you lived. Now death and fate have closed in upon you.'
So she spoke in tears but the wife of Hektor had not yet
heard: for no sure messenger had come to her and told her
how her husband had held his ground there outside the gates;
but she was weaving a web in the inner room of the high house,
a red folding robe, and inworking elaborate figures.
She called out through the house to her lovely-haired handmaidens
to set a great cauldron over the fire, so that there would be
hot water for Hektor's bath as he came back out of the fighting;
poor innocent, nor knew how, far from waters for bathing,
Pallas Athene had cut him down at the hands of Achilleus.
She heard from the great bastion the noise of mourning and sorrow.
Her limbs spun, and the shuttle dropped from her hand to the ground. Then
she called aloud to her lovely-haired handmaidens: 'Come here.
Two of you come with me, so I can see what has happened.
I heard the voice of Hektor's honoured mother; within me
my own heart rising beats in my mouth, my limbs under me
are frozen. Surely some evil is near for the children of Priam.
May what I say come never close to my ear; yet dreadfully
I fear that great Achilleus might have cut off bold Hektor
alone, away from the city, and be driving him into the flat land,
might put an end to that bitter pride of courage, that always
was on him, since he would never stay back where the men were in numbers
but break far out in front, and give way in his fury to no man.'
So she spoke, and ran out of the house like a raving woman
with pulsing heart, and her two handmaidens went along with her.
But when she came to the bastion and where the men were gathered
she stopped, staring, on the wall; and she saw him
being dragged in front of the city, and the running horses

dragged him at random toward the hollow ships of the Achaians.
The darkness of night misted over the eyes of Andromache.
She fell backward, and gasped the life breath from her, and far off
threw from her head the shining gear that ordered her headdress,
the diadem and the cap, and the holding-band woven together,
and the circlet, which Aphrodite the golden once had given her
on that day when Hektor of the shining helmet led her forth
from the house of Eëtion, and gave numberless gifts to win her.
And about her stood thronging her husband's sisters and the wives of his brothers
and these, in her despair for death, held her up among them.
But she, when she breathed again and the life was gathered back into her,
lifted her voice among the women of Troy in mourning:
'Hektor, I grieve for you. You and I were born to a single
destiny, you in Troy in the house of Priam, and I
in Thebe, underneath the timbered mountain of Plakos
in the house of Eëtion, who cared for me when I was little,
ill-fated he, I ill-starred. I wish he had never begotten me.
Now you go down to the house of Death in the secret places
of the earth, and left me here behind in the sorrow of mourning,
a widow in your house, and the boy is only a baby
who was born to you and me, the unfortunate. You cannot help him,
Hektor, any more, since you are dead. Nor can he help you.
Though he escape the attack of the Achaians with all its sorrows,
yet all his days for your sake there will be hard work for him
and sorrows, for others will take his lands away from him. The day
of bereavement leaves a child with no agemates to befriend him.
He bows his head before every man, his cheeks are bewept, he
goes, needy, a boy among his father's companions,
and tugs at this man by the mantle, that man by the tunic,
and they pity him, and one gives him a tiny drink from a goblet,
enough to moisten his lips, not enough to moisten his palate.
But one whose parents are living beats him out of the banquet
hitting him with his fists and in words also abuses him:
"Get out, you! Your father is not dining among us."
And the boy goes away in tears to his widowed mother,
Astyanax, who in days before on the knees of his father
would eat only the marrow or the flesh of sheep that was fattest.
And when sleep would come upon him and he was done with his playing,
he would go to sleep in a bed, in the arms of his nurse, in a soft
bed, with his heart given all its fill of luxury.
Now, with his dear father gone, he has much to suffer:
he, whom the Trojans have called Astyanax, lord of the city,
since it was you alone who defended the gates and the long walls.
But now, beside the curving ships, far away from your parents,
the writhing worms will feed, when the dogs have had enough of you,
on your naked corpse, though in your house there is clothing laid up
that is fine-textured and pleasant, wrought by the hands of women.
But all of these I will burn up in the fire's blazing,
no use to you, since you will never be laid away in them;
but in your honour, from the men of Troy and the Trojan women.'
So she spoke, in tears; and the women joined in her mourning.

Reading 1.4 Homer, *The Iliad*, Book 23

(Source: Lattimore, R. (trans.) (1961) *The Iliad of Homer*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, pp.450–74)

So they were mourning through the city. Meanwhile, the Achaians,
after they had made their way back to their ships and the Hellespont,
scattered, the rest of them, each man to his own ship. Except
Achilleus would not allow the Myrmidons to be scattered,
but called out to his companions whose delight was in battle:
'Myrmidons, you of the fast horses, my steadfast companions,
we must not yet slip free of the chariots our single-foot horses,
but with these very horses and chariots we must drive close up
to Patroklos and mourn him, since such is the privilege of the perished.
Then, when we have taken full satisfaction from the sorrowful
dirge, we shall set our horses free, and all of us eat here.'
He spoke, and all of them assembled moaned, and Achilleus led them.
Three times, mourning, they drove their horses with flowing manes about
the body, and among them Thetis stirred the passion for weeping.
The sands were wet, and the armour of men was wet with their tears. Such
was their longing after Patroklos, who drove men to thoughts of terror.
Peleus' son led the thronging chant of their lamentation,
and laid his manslaughtering hands over the chest of his dear friend:
'Good-bye, Patroklos. I hail you even in the house of the death god.
All that I promised you in time past I am accomplishing,
that I would drag Hektor here and give him to the dogs to feed on
raw, and before your burning pyre to behead twelve glorious
children of the Trojans for my anger over your slaying.'
He spoke, and thought of shameful treatment for glorious Hektor.
He laid him on his face in the dust by the bier of Menoitios'
son. Meanwhile the others took off each man his glittering
brazen armour, and all unyoked their proud neighing horses
and sat down in their thousands beside the ship of swift-footed
Aiakides, who set the funeral feast in abundance
before them; and many shining oxen were slaughtered with the stroke
of the iron, and many sheep and bleating goats and numerous
swine with shining teeth and the fat abundant upon them
were singed and stretched out across the flame of Hephaistos.
The blood ran and was caught in cups all around the dead man.
But now the kings of the Achaians brought the swift-footed
lord, the son of Peleus, to great Agamemnon, hardly
persuading him, since his heart was still angered for his companion.
When these had made their way to the shelter of Agamemnon
straightway they gave orders to the heralds, the clear crying,
to set a great cauldron over the fire, if so they might persuade
the son of Peleus to wash away the filth of the bloodstains,
but he denied them stubbornly and swore an oath on it:
'No, before Zeus, who is greatest of gods and the highest,
there is no right in letting water come near my head, until
I have laid Patroklos on the burning pyre, and heaped the mound over him,
and cut my hair for him, since there will come no second sorrow
like this to my heart again while I am still one of the living.
Then let us now give way to the gloomy feast; and with the dawn
cause your people to rise, o lord of men Agamemnon,

and bring in timber and lay it by, with all that is fitting
for the dead man to have when he goes down under the gloom and the darkness,
so that with the more speed the unwearying fire may burn him
away from our eyes, and the people turn back to that which they must do.'
So he spoke, and they listened well to him and obeyed him,
and in speed and haste they got the dinner ready, and each man
feasted, nor was any men's hunger denied a fair portion.
But when they had put aside their desire for eating and drinking,
they went away to sleep, each man into his own shelter,
but along the beach of the thunderous sea the son of Peleus
lay down, groaning heavily, among the Myrmidon numbers
in a clear place where the waves washed over the beach; and at that time
sleep caught him and was drifted sweetly about him, washing
the sorrows out of his mind, for his shining limbs were grown weary
indeed, from running in chase of Hektor toward windy Ilion;
and there appeared to him the ghost of unhappy Patroklos
all in his likeness for stature, and the lovely eyes, and voice,
and wore such clothing as Patroklos had worn on his body.
The ghost came and stood over his head and spoke a word to him:
'You sleep, Achilleus; you have forgotten me; but you were not
careless of me when I lived, but only in death. Bury me
as quickly as may be, let me pass through the gates of Hades.
The souls, the images of dead men, hold me at a distance,
and will not let me cross the river and mingle among them,
but I wander as I am by Hades' house of the wide gates.
And I call upon you in sorrow, give me your hand; no longer
shall I come back from death, once you give me my rite of burning.
No longer shall you and I, alive, sit apart from our other
beloved companions and make our plans, since the bitter destiny
that was given me when I was born has opened its jaws to take me.
And you, Achilleus like the gods, have your own destiny;
to be killed under the wall of the prospering Trojans. There is one
more thing I will say, and ask of you, if you will obey me:
do not have my bones laid apart from yours, Achilleus,
but with them, just as we grew up together in your house,
when Menoitios brought me there from Opous, when I was little,
and into your house, by reason of a baneful manslaying,
on that day when I killed the son of Amphidamas. I was
a child only, nor intended it, but was angered over a dice game.
There the rider Peleus took me into his own house,
and brought me carefully up, and named me to be your henchman.
Therefore, let one single vessel, the golden two-handled
urn the lady your mother gave you, hold both our ashes.'
Then in answer to him spoke swift-footed Achilleus:
'How is it, o hallowed head of my brother, you have come back to me
here, and tell me all these several things? Yet surely
I am accomplishing all, and I shall do as you tell me.
But stand closer to me, and let us, if only for a little,
embrace, and take full satisfaction from the dirge of sorrow.'
So he spoke, and with his own arms reached for him, but could not
take him, but the spirit went underground, like vapour,
with a thin cry, and Achilleus started awake, staring,

and drove his hands together, and spoke, and his words were sorrowful:
'Oh, wonder! Even in the house of Hades there is left something,
a soul and an image, but there is no real heart of life in it.
For all night long the phantom of unhappy Patroklos
stood over me in lamentation and mourning, and the likeness
to him was wonderful, and it told me each thing I should do.'
So he spoke, and stirred in all of them the passion of mourning,
and Dawn of the rose fingers showed on them as still they mourned
about the forlorn body. Now powerful Agamemnon
gave order for men and mules to assemble from all the shelters
and bring in timber, and a great man led them in motion,
Meriones, the henchman of courtly Idomeneus. These then
went out and in their hands carried axes to cut wood
and ropes firmly woven, and their mules went on ahead of them.
They went many ways, uphill, downhill, sidehill and slantwise;
but when they came to the spurs of Ida with all her well springs,
they set to hewing with the thin edge of bronze and leaning
their weight to the strokes on towering-leafed oak trees that toppled
with huge crashing; then the Achaians splitting the timbers
fastened them to the mules and these with their feet tore up
the ground as they pulled through the dense undergrowth to the flat land.
All the woodcutters carried logs themselves; such was the order
of Meriones, the henchman of courtly Idomeneus. These then
threw down their burdens in order along the beach, where Achilleus
had chosen place for a huge grave mound, for himself and Patroklos.
Then when on all sides they had thrown down abundance of timber,
they sat down where they were, assembled. And now Achilleus
gave order at once to the Myrmidons, whose delight was in battle,
to belt themselves in bronze and each man to yoke his horses
to the chariot. And they rose up and got into their armour
and stepped up, charioteer and sideman, into the chariots
with the horsemen in front, and behind them came on a cloud of foot-soldiers
by thousands; and in the midst his companions carried Patroklos.
They covered all the corpse under the locks of their hair, which they cut
off
and dropped on him, and behind them brilliant Achilleus held the head
sorrowing, for this was his true friend he escorted toward Hades.
When these had come to the place Achilleus had spoken of to them
they laid him down, and quickly piled up abundant timber.
And now brilliant swift-footed Achilleus remembered one more thing.
He stood apart from the pyre and cut off a lock of fair hair
which he had grown long to give to the river Spercheios, and gazing
in deep distress out over the wine-blue water, he spoke forth:
'Spercheios, it was in vain that Peleus my father vowed to you
that there, when I had won home to the beloved land of my fathers,
I would cut my hair for you and make you a grand and holy
sacrifice of fifty rams consecrate to the waters
of your springs, where is your holy ground and your smoking altar.
So the old man vowed, but you did not accomplish his purpose.
Now, since I do not return to the beloved land of my fathers,
I would give my hair into the keeping of the hero Patroklos.'
He spoke, and laid his hair in the hands of his beloved
companion, and stirred in all of them the passion of mourning.

And now the light of the sun would have set on their lamentation
had not Achilleus soon stood by Agamemnon and spoken:
'Son of Atreus, beyond others the people of the Achaians
will obey your words. There can be enough, even in mourning.
Now cause them to scatter from the fire and bid them make ready
their dinner; and we, who are most nearly concerned with the dead man,
shall do this work; except only let the leaders stay near us.'

Then the lord of men, Agamemnon, when he had heard this,
at once caused the people to disperse among the balanced ships,
but the close mourners stayed by the place and piled up the timber,
and built a pyre a hundred feet long this way and that way,
and on the peak of the pyre they laid the body, sorrowful
at heart; and in front of it skinned and set in order numbers
of fat sheep and shambling horn-curved cattle; and from all
great-hearted Achilleus took the fat and wrapped the corpse in it
from head to foot, and piled up the skinned bodies about it.
Then he set beside him two-handled jars of oil and honey
leaning them against the bier, and drove four horses with strong necks
swiftly aloft the pyre with loud lamentation. And there were
nine dogs of the table that had belonged to the lord Patroklos.
Of these he cut the throats of two, and set them on the pyre;
and so also killed twelve noble sons of the great-hearted Trojans
with the stroke of bronze, and evil were the thoughts in his heart against them,
and let loose the iron fury of the fire to feed on them.
Then he groaned, and called by name on his beloved companion:
'Good-bye, Patroklos. I hail you even in the house of the death god
For all that I promised you in time past I am accomplishing.
Here are twelve noble sons of the great-hearted Trojans
whom the fire feeds on, all, as it feeds on you. But I will not
give Hektor, Priam's son, to the fire, but the dogs, to feast on.'

So he spoke his threat. But the dogs did not deal with Hektor,
for Aphrodite, daughter of Zeus, drove the dogs back from him
by day and night, and anointed him with rosy immortal
oil, so Achilleus, when he dragged him about, might not tear him.
And Phoibos Apollo brought down a darkening mist about him
from the sky to the plain, and covered with it all the space that was taken
by the dead man, to keep the force of the sun from coming
first, and wither his body away by limbs and sinews.

But the pyre of dead Patroklos would not light. Then swift-footed
brilliant Achilleus thought of one more thing that he must do.
He stood apart from the pyre and made his prayer to the two winds
Boreas and Zephyros, north wind and west, and promised them splendid
offerings, and much outpouring from a golden goblet entreated them
to come, so that the bodies might with best speed burn in the fire
and the timber burst into flame. And Iris, hearing his prayer,
went swiftly as messenger to the winds for him. Now the winds
assembled within the house of storm-blowing Zephyros
were taking part in a feast, and Iris paused in her running
and stood on the stone doorsill; but they, when their eyes saw her,
sprang to their feet, and each one asked her to sit beside him.
But she refused to be seated and spoke her word to them: 'I must not
sit down. I am going back to the running waters of Ocean
and the Aithiopians' land, where they are making grand sacrifice

to the immortals; there I, too, shall partake of the sacraments.
But Achilleus' prayer is that Boreas and blustering Zephyros
may come to him, and he promises them splendid offerings,
so that you may set ablaze the funeral pyre, whereon lies
Patroklos, with all Achaians mourning about him.'
She spoke so, and went away, and they with immortal
clamour rose up, and swept the clouds in confusion before them.
They came with a sudden blast upon the sea, and the waves rose
under the whistling wind. They came to the generous Troad
and hit the pyre, and a huge inhuman blaze rose, roaring.
Nightlong they piled the flames on the funeral pyre together
and blew with a screaming blast, and nightlong swift-footed Achilleus
from a golden mixing-bowl, with a two-handled goblet in his hand,
drew the wine and poured it on the ground and drenched the ground
with it,
and called upon the soul of unhappy Patroklos. And as
a father mourns as he burns the bones of a son, who was married
only now, and died to grieve his unhappy parents,
so Achilleus was mourning as he burned his companion's
bones, and dragged himself by the fire in close lamentation.
At that time when the dawn star passes across earth, harbinger
of light, and after him dawn of the saffron mantle is scattered
across the sea, the fire died down and the flames were over.
The winds took their way back toward home again, crossing
the Thracian water, and it boiled with a moaning swell as they crossed it.
The son of Peleus turned aside and away from the burning
and lay down exhausted, and sweet sleep rose upon him. But now
they who were with the son of Atreus assembled together
and the sound and murmur of their oncoming wakened Achilleus,
who straightened himself and sat upright and spoke a word to him:
'Son of Atreus, and you other greatest of all the Achaians,
first put out with gleaming wine the pyre that is burning,
all that still has on it the fury of fire; and afterwards
we shall gather up the bones of Patroklos, the son of Menoitios,
which we shall easily tell apart, since they are conspicuous
where he lay in the middle of the pyre and the others far from him
at the edge burned, the men indiscriminately with the horses.
And let us lay his bones in a golden jar and a double
fold of fat, until I myself enfold him in Hades.
And I would have you build a grave mound which is not very great
but such as will be fitting, for now; afterwards, the Achaians
can make it broad and high – such of you Achaians as may be
left to survive me here by the benched ships, after I am gone.'
So he spoke, and they did as swift-footed Peleion told them.
First with gleaming wine they put out the pyre that was burning,
as much as was still aflame, and the ashes dropped deep from it.
Then they gathered up the white bones of their gentle companion,
weeping, and put them into a golden jar with a double
fold of fat, and laid it away in his shelter, and covered it
with a thin veil; then laid out the tomb and cast down the holding walls
around the funeral pyre, then heaped the loose earth over them
and piled the tomb, and turned to go away. But Achilleus
held the people there, and made them sit down in a wide assembly,

and brought prizes for games out of his ships, cauldrons and tripods,
and horses and mules and the powerful high heads of cattle
and fair-girdled women and grey iron. First of all
he set forth the glorious prizes for speed of foot for the horsemen:
a woman faultless in the work of her hands to lead away
and a tripod with ears and holding twenty-two measures
for the first prize; and for the second he set forth a six-year-old
unbroken mare who carried a mule foal within her.
Then for the third prize he set forth a splendid unfired
cauldron, which held four measures, with its natural gloss still upon it.
For the fourth place he set out two talents' weight of gold, and for
the fifth place set forth an unfired jar with two handles.
He stood upright and spoke his word out among the Argives:
'Son of Atreus and all you other strong-greaved Achaians,
these prizes are in the place of games and wait for the horsemen.
Now if we Achaians were contending for the sake of some other
hero, I myself should take the first prize away to my shelter.
You know how much my horses surpass in their speed all others;
yes, for they are immortal horses, and Poseidon gave them
to Peleus my father, who in turn gave them into my hands.
But I stay here at the side, and my single-foot horses stay with me;
such is the high glory of the charioteer they have lost,
the gentle one, who so many times anointed their manes with
soft olive oil, after he had washed them in shining water.
Therefore these two horses stand here and grieve, and their manes
are swept along the ground as they stand with hearts full of sorrow.
But take, the rest of you, places in the field, whichever Achaian
has confidence in his horses and his compacted chariot.'

So spoke the son of Peleus, and the swift riders gathered.
Far the first to rise up was the lord of men Eumelos,
own son of Admetos, who surpassed in horsemanship. After
him rose up the son of Tydeus, strong Diomedes,
and led under the yoke the Trojan horses whom he had taken
by force from Aineias, but Aineias himself was saved by Apollo.
After him rose the son of Atreus, fair-haired Menelaos
the sky-descended, and led beneath the yoke the swift horses,
Aithe, Agamemnon's mare, and his own Podargos.
Echepolos, son of Anchises, gave her to Agamemnon
as a gift, so as not to have to go with him to windy Ilion
but stay where he was and enjoy himself, since Zeus had given him
great wealth, and he made his home in the wide spaces of Sikyon.
This mare, who was straining hard for the race, Menelaos harnessed.
Fourth to order his horses with flowing manes was Antilochos,
the glorious son of Nestor, Neleus' son, the high-hearted
lord, and fast-running horses out of the breed of Pylos
pulled his chariot, and his father standing close beside him
gave well-intentioned advice to his own good understanding:
'Antilochos, you are young indeed, but Zeus and Poseidon
have loved you and taught you horsemanship in all of its aspects.
Therefore there is no great need to instruct you; you yourself
know well how to double the turning-post. Yet in this race your horse
should run slowest. Therefore I think your work will be heavy.
The horses of these men are faster, but they themselves do not

understand any more than you of the science of racing.
Remember then, dear son, to have your mind full of every
resource of skill, so that the prizes may not elude you.
The woodcutter is far better for skill than he is for brute strength.
It is by skill that the sea captain holds his rapid ship
on its course, though torn by winds, over the wine-blue water.
By skill charioteer outpasses charioteer. He
who has put all his confidence in his horses and chariot
and recklessly makes a turn that is loose one way or another
finds his horses drifting out of the course and does not control them.
But the man, though he drive the slower horses, who takes his advantage,
keeps his eye always on the post and turns tight, ever watchful,
pulled with the ox-hide reins on the course, as in the beginning,
and holds his horses steady in hand, and watches the leader.
I will give you a clear mark and you cannot fail to notice it.
There is a dry stump standing up from the ground about six feet,
oak, it may be, or pine, and not rotted away by rain-water,
and two white stones are leaned against it, one on either side,
at the joining place of the ways, and there is smooth driving around it.
Either it is the grave-mark of someone who died long ago,
or was set as a racing goal by men who lived before our time.
Now swift-footed brilliant Achilleus has made it the turning-post.
You must drive your chariot and horses so as to hug this,
and yourself, in the strong-fabricated chariot, lean over
a little to the left of the course, and as for your right horse, whip him
and urge him along, slackening your hands to give him his full rein,
but make your left-hand horse keep hard against the turning-post
so that the hub's edge of your fashioned wheel will seem to be
touching it, yet take care not really to brush against it,
for, if so, you might damage your horses and break your chariot,
and that will be a thing of joy for the others, and a failure
for you. So, dear son, drive thoughtfully and be watchful.
For if you follow the others but get first by the turning-post,
there is none who could sprint to make it up, nor close you, nor pass you,
not if the man behind you were driving the great Arion,
the swift horse of Adrestos, whose birth is from the immortals,
or Laomedon's horses, who were the pride of those raised in this country.'
So spoke Nestor the son of Neleus, and turned back to his place
and sat down, having talked to his son of each stage in the contest.
Fifth to order his horses with flowing manes was Meriones.
They climbed to the chariots and deposited the lots. Achilleus
shook them, and the first to fall out was that of Antilochos,
Nestor's son, and strong Eumelos drew next after him,
and after him the son of Atreus, Menelaos the spear-famed.
Meriones drew the next lane to drive, and the last for the driving
of horses was drawn by far the best of them all, Diomedes.
They stood in line for the start, and Achilleus showed them the turn-post
far away on the level plain, and beside it he stationed
a judge, Phoinix the godlike, the follower of his father,
to mark and remember the running and bring back a true story.
Then all held their whips high-lifted above their horses,
then struck with the whip thongs and in words urged their horses onward
into speed. Rapidly they made their way over the flat land

and presently were far away from the ships. The dust lifting
clung beneath the horses' chests like cloud or a stormwhirl.
Their manes streamed along the blast of the wind, the chariots
rocking now would dip to the earth who fosters so many
and now again would spring up clear of the ground, and the drivers
stood in the chariots, with the spirit beating in each man
with the strain to win, and each was calling aloud upon his own
horses, and the horses flew through the dust of the flat land.
But as the rapid horses were running the last of the race-course
back, and toward the grey sea, then the mettle of each began to
show itself, and the field of horses strung out, and before long
out in front was the swift-stepping team of the son of Pheres,
Eumelos, and after him the stallions of Diomedes,
the Trojan horses, not far behind at all, but close on him,
for they seemed forever on the point of climbing his chariot
and the wind of them was hot on the back and on the broad shoulders
of Eumelos. They lowered their heads and flew close after him.
And now he might have passed him or run to a doubtful decision,
had not Phoibos Apollo been angry with Diomedes,
Tydeus' son, and dashed the shining whip from his hands, so
that the tears began to stream from his eyes, for his anger
as he watched how the mares of Eumelos drew far ahead of him
while his own horses ran without the whip and were slowed. Yet
Athene did not fail to see the foul play of Apollo
on Tydeus' son. She swept in speed to the shepherd of the people
and gave him back his whip, and inspired strength into his horses.
Then in her wrath she went on after the son of Admetos
and she, a goddess, smashed his chariot yoke, and his horses
ran on either side of the way, the pole dragged, and Eumelos
himself was sent spinning out beside the wheel of the chariot
so that his elbows were all torn, and his mouth, and his nostrils,
and his forehead was lacerated about the brows, and his eyes
filled with tears, and the springing voice was held fast within him.
Then the son of Tydeus, turning his single-foot horses to pass him,
went far out in front of the others, seeing that Athene
had inspired strength in his horses and to himself gave the glory.
After him came the son of Atreus, fair-haired Menelaos.
But Antilochos cried out aloud to his father's horses:
'Come on, you two. Pull, as fast as you can! I am not
trying to make you match your speed with the speed of those others,
the horses of Tydeus' valiant son, to whom now Athene
has granted speed and to their rider has given the glory.
But make your burst to catch the horses of the son of Atreus
nor let them leave you behind, for fear Aithe who is female
may shower you in mockery. Are you falling back, my brave horses?
For I will tell you this, and it will be a thing accomplished.
There will be no more care for you from the shepherd of the people,
Nestor, but he will slaughter you out of hand with the edge
of bronze, if we win the meaner prize because you are unwilling.
Keep on close after him and make all the speed you are able.
I myself shall know what to do and contrive it, so that
we get by in the narrow place of the way. He will not escape me.'
So he spoke, and they fearing the angry voice of their master

ran harder for a little while, and presently after this
battle-stubborn Antilochos saw where the hollow way narrowed.
There was a break in the ground where winter water had gathered
and broken out of the road, and made a sunken place all about.
Menelaos shrinking from a collision of chariots steered there,
but Antilochos also turned out his single-foot horses
from the road, and bore a little way aside, and went after him;
and the son of Atreus was frightened and called out aloud to Antilochos:
'Antilochos, this is reckless horsemanship. Hold in your horses.
The way is narrow here, it will soon be wider for passing.
Be careful not to crash your chariot and wreck both of us.'
So he spoke, but Antilochos drove on all the harder
with a whiplash for greater speed, as if he had never heard him.
As far as is the range of a discus swung from the shoulder
and thrown by a stripling who tries out the strength of his young manhood,
so far they ran even, but then the mares of Atreides gave way
and fell back, for he of his own will slackened his driving
for fear that in the road the single-foot horses might crash
and overturn the strong-fabricated chariots, and the men
themselves go down in the dust through their hard striving for victory.
But Menelaos of the fair hair called to him in anger:
'Antilochos, there is no other man more cursed than you are.
Damn you. We Achaians lied when we said you had good sense.
Even so, you will not get this prize without having to take oath.'
He spoke, and lifted his voice and called aloud to his horses:
'Never hold back now, never stop, for all your hearts are
sorrowful. The feet of these and their knees will weary
before yours do, seeing that the youth is gone from those horses.'
So he spoke, and they fearing the angry voice of their master
ran the harder, and soon were close up behind the others.
Now the Argives who sat in their assembly were watching
the horses, and the horses flew through the dust of the flat land.
Idomeneus, lord of the Kretans, was first to make out the horses,
for he sat apart from the others assembled, and higher up, where
he could see all ways, and from far off he heard Diomedes
calling, and knew him, and made out one horse ahead of the others
who was conspicuous, all red, except on his forehead
there was a white mark, round, like the full moon. Idomeneus
rose to his feet upright and spoke his word out to the Argives:
'Friends, who are leaders of the Argives and keep their counsel:
am I the only one who can see the horses, or can you
also? It seems to me there are other horses leading
and I make out another charioteer. The mares of Eumelos
must have come to grief somewhere in the plain, who led on the way out,
for those I saw running out in front as they made the turn-post
I can see no longer anywhere, though I watch and though my eyes
look everywhere about the plain of Troy. But it must be
that the reins got away from the charioteer, or he could not hold them
well in hand at the goal and failed to double the turn-post.
There I think he must have been thrown out and his chariot broken,
and the mares bolted away with the wildness upon their spirit.
But you also stand up and look for yourselves; I cannot
well make out, but it seems to me the man who is leading

is an Aitolian by birth, but lord of the Argives,
the son of Tydeus, breaker of horses, strong Diomedes.'
Swift Aias, son of Oïleus, spoke shamefully to him in anger:
'Idomeneus, what was all this windy talk? The light-footed
horses are still far where they sweep over the great plain.
You are not by so much the youngest among the Argives,
nor do the eyes in your head see so much sharper than others.
But forever you are windy with your words, and you should not
be a windy speaker. There are others here better than you are.
The horses who are in front are the same as before, and they are
those of Eumelos, and he stands holding the reins behind them.'
The lord of the Kretans answered him to his face in anger:
'Aias, surpassing in abuse, yet stupid, in all else
you are worst of the Argives with that stubborn mind of yours. Come then,
let us put up a wager of a tripod or cauldron
and make Agamemnon, son of Atreus, witness between us
as to which horses lead. And when you pay, you win find out.'
So he spoke, and swift Aias, son of Oïleus, was rising
up, angry in turn, to trade hard words with him. And now
the quarrel between the two of them would have gone still further,
had not Achilleus himself risen up and spoken between them:
'No longer now, Aias and Idomeneus, continue
to exchange this bitter and evil talk. It is not becoming.
If another acted so, you yourselves would be angry.
Rather sit down again among those assembled and watch for
the horses, and they in their strain for victory will before long
be here. Then you each can see for himself, and learn which
of the Argives horses have run first and which have run second.'
He spoke, and now Tydeus' son in his rapid course was close on them
and he lashed them always with the whipstroke from the shoulder. His
horses
still lifted their feet light and high as they made their swift passage.
Dust flying splashed always the charioteer, and the chariot
that was overlaid with gold and tin still rolled hard after
the flying feet of the horses, and in their wake there was not much
trace from the running rims of the wheels left in the thin dust.
The horses came in running hard. Diomedes stopped them
in the middle of where the men were assembled, with the dense sweat starting
and dripping to the ground from neck and chest of his horses.
He himself vaulted down to the ground from his shining chariot
and leaned his whip against the yoke. Nor did strong Sthenelos
delay, but made haste to take up the prizes, and gave the woman
to his high-hearted companions to lead away and the tripod
with ears to carry, while Diomedes set free the horses.
After him Neleian Antilochos drove in his horses,
having passed Menelaos, not by speed but by taking advantage.
But even so Menelaos held his fast horses close on him.
As far as from the wheel stands the horse who is straining
to pull his master with the chariot over the flat land;
the extreme hairs in the tail of the horse brush against the running
rim of the wheel, and he courses very close, there is not much
space between as he runs a great way over the flat land;
by so much Menelaos was left behind by Antilochos

the blameless. At first he was left behind the length of a discus
thrown, but was overhauling him fast, with Aithe
of the fair mane, Agamemnon's mare putting on a strong burst.
If both of them had had to run the course any further,
Menelaos would have passed him, and there could have been no argument.
But Meriones, strong henchman of Idomeneus, was left
a spearcast's length behind by glorious Menelaos.
For his horses with splendid manes were slowest of all, and likewise
he himself was of least account for the racing of chariots.
Last and behind them all came in the son of Admetos
dragging his fine chariot and driving his horses before him,
and seeing this, brilliant swift-footed Achilleus took pity upon him
and stood forth among the Argives and spoke to them all in winged words:
'The best man is driving his single-foot horses in last.
Come then, we must give some kind of prize, and well he deserves it;
second prize; let first place go to the son of Tydeus.'
So he spoke, and all gave approval to what he was urging,
and he would have given him the horse, since all the Achaians
approved, had not Antilochos, son of great-hearted Nestor,
stood up to answer Peleid Achilleus, and argue:
'Achilleus, I shall be very angry with you if you accomplish
what you have said. You mean to take my prize away from me,
with the thought in mind that his chariot fouled and his running horses
but he himself is great. He should have prayed to the immortal
gods. That is why he came in last of all in the running.
But if you are sorry for him and he is dear to your liking,
there is abundant gold in your shelter, and there is bronze there
and animals, and there are handmaidens and single-foot horses.
You can take from these, and give him afterwards a prize still greater
than mine, or now at once, and have the Achaians applaud you.
But the mare I will not give up, and the man who wants her
must fight me for her with his hands before he can take her.'
So he spoke, but brilliant swift-footed Achilleus, favouring
Antilochos, smiled, since he was his beloved companion,
and answered him and addressed him in winged words: 'Antilochos,
if you would have me bring some other thing out of my dwelling
as special gift for Eumelos, then for your sake I will do it.
I will give him that corselet I stripped from Asteropaios;
it is bronze, but there is an overlay circled about it
in shining tin. It will be a gift that will mean much to him.'
He spoke, and told Automedon, his beloved companion,
to bring it out of the shelter, and he went away, and brought it back,
and put it in Eumelos' hands. And he accepted it joyfully.
But now Menelaos, heart full of bitterness, stood up among them
in relentless anger against Antilochos, and the herald
put the staff into his hand and gave the call for the Argives
to be silent. And he stood forth, a man like a god, and spoke to them:
'Antilochos, you had good sense once. See what you have done.
You have defiled my horsemanship, you have fouled my horses
by throwing your horses in their way, though yours were far slower.
Come then, o leaders of the Argives and their men of counsel:
judge between the two of us now; and without favour;
so that no man of the bronze-armoured Achaians shall say of us:

"Menelaos using lies and force against Antilochos
went off with the mare he won, for his horses were far slower
but he himself was greater in power and degree." Or rather
come, I myself will give the judgment, and I think no other
man of the Danaans can call it in question, for it will be right.
Antilochos, beloved of Zeus, come here. This is justice.
Stand in front of your horses and chariot, and in your hand take
up the narrow whip with which you drove them before, then
lay your hand on the horses and swear by him who encircles
the earth and shakes it you used no guile to baffle my chariot.'
Then in turn Antilochos of the good counsel answered him:
'Enough now. For I, my lord Menelaos, am younger
by far than you, and you are the greater and go before me.
You know how greedy transgressions flower in a young man, seeing
that his mind is the more active but his judgment is lightweight. Therefore
I would have your heart be patient with me. I myself will give you
the mare I won, and if there were something still greater you asked for
out of my house, I should still be willing at once to give it
to you, beloved of Zeus, rather than all my days
fall from your favour and be in the wrong before the divinities.'
He spoke, the son of Nestor the great-hearted, and leading
the mare up gave her to Menelaos' hands. But his anger
was softened, as with dew the ears of corn are softened
in the standing corn growth of a shuddering field. For you also
the heart, o Menelaos, was thus softened within you.
He spoke to him aloud and addressed him in winged words: 'Antilochos,
I myself, who was angry, now will give way before you,
since you were not formerly loose-minded or vain. It is only
that this time your youth got the better of your intelligence.
Beware another time of playing tricks on your betters.
Any other man of the Achaians might not have appeased me.
But you have suffered much for me, and done much hard work,
and your noble father, too, and your brother for my sake. Therefore
I will be ruled by your supplication. I will even give you
the mare, though she is mine, so that these men too may be witnesses
that the heart is never arrogant nor stubborn within me.'
He spoke, and gave Antilochos' companion, Noëmon,
the mare to lead away, and himself took the glittering cauldron.
Fourth, in the order he had driven, Meriones took up
the two talents' weight of gold. But the fifth prize, the two-handled
jar, was left. Achilleus carried it through the assembly
of the Argives, and gave it to Nestor, and stood by and spoke to him:
'This, aged sir, is yours to lay away as a treasure
in memory of the burial of Patroklos; since never
again will you see him among the Argives. I give you this prize
for the giving; since never again will you fight with your fists nor wrestle,
nor enter again the field for the spear-throwing, nor race
on your feet; since now the hardship of old age is upon you.'
He spoke, and put it in the hands of Nestor, who took it
joyfully and spoke in answer and addressed him in winged words:
'Yes, child: all this you said to me was true as you said it.
My limbs are no longer steady, dear friend; not my feet, neither
do my arms, as once they did, swing light from my shoulders.

I wish I were young again and the strength still unshaken within me
as once, when great Amaryngkeus was buried by the Epeians
at Bouprasion, and his sons gave games for a king's funeral.
There there was no man like me, not among the Epeians
nor yet of the Pylians themselves or great-hearted Aitolians.
At boxing I won against Klytomedes, the son of Enops,
at wrestling against Angkaios of Pleuron, who stood up against me.
In the foot-race, for all his speed, I outran Iphiklos,
and with the spear I out-threw Polydoros and Phyleus.
It was only in the chariot-race that the sons of Aktor
defeated me, crossing me in the crowd, so intent on winning
were they, for the biggest prizes had been left for the horse-race.
Now these sons of Aktor were twins; one held the reins at his leisure,
held the reins at his leisure while the other lashed on the horses.
This was I, once. Now it is for the young men to encounter
in such actions, and for me to give way to the persuasion
of gloomy old age. But once I shone among the young heroes.
Go now, and honour the death of your companion with contests.
I accept this from you gratefully, and my heart is happy
that you have remembered me and my kindness, that I am not forgotten
for the honour that should be my honour among the Achaians.
May the gods, for what you have done for me, give you great happiness.'
He spoke, and Peleides went back among the great numbers
of Achaians assembled, when he had listened to all the praise spoken
by Neleus' son, and set forth the prizes for the painful boxing.
He led out into the field and tethered there a hard-working
six-year-old unbroken jenny, the kind that is hardest
to break; and for the loser set out a two-handled goblet.
He stood upright and spoke his word out among the Argives:
'Son of Atreus, and all you other strong-greaved-Achaians,
we invite two men, the best among you, to contend for these prizes
with their hands up for the blows of boxing. He whom Apollo
grants to outlast the other, and all the Achaians witness it,
let him lead away the hard-working jenny to his own shelter.
The beaten man shall take away the two-handled goblet.'
He spoke, and a man huge and powerful, well skilled in boxing,
rose up among them; the son of Panopeus, Epeios.
He laid his hand on the hard-working jenny, and spoke out:
'Let the man come up who will carry off the two-handled goblet.
I say no other of the Achaians will beat me at boxing
and lead off the jenny. I claim I am the champion. Is it not
enough that I fall short in battle? Since it could not be
ever, that a man could be a master in every endeavour.
For I tell you this straight out, and it will be a thing accomplished.
I will smash his skin apart and break his bones on each other.
Let those who care for him wait nearby in a huddle about him
to carry him out, after my fists have beaten him under.'
So he spoke, and all of them stayed stricken to silence.
Alone Euryalos stood up to face him, a godlike
man, son of lord Mekisteus of the seed of Talaos;
of him who came once to Thebes and the tomb of Oidipous after
his downfall, and there in boxing defeated all the Kadmeians.
The spear-famed son of Tydeus was his second, and talked to him

in encouragement, and much desired the victory for him.
First he pulled on the boxing belt about his waist, and then
gave him the thongs carefully cut from the hide of a ranging
ox. The two men, girt up, strode into the midst of the circle
and faced each other, and put up their ponderous hands at the same time
and closed, so that their heavy arms were crossing each other,
and there was a fierce grinding of teeth, the sweat began to run
everywhere from their bodies. Great Epeios came in, and hit him
as he peered out from his guard, on the cheek, and he could no longer
keep his feet, but where he stood the glorious limbs gave.
As in the water roughened by the north wind a fish jumps
in the weeds of the beach-break, then the dark water closes above him,
so Euryalos left the ground from the blow, but great-hearted Epeios
took him in his arms and set him upright, and his true companions
stood about him, and led him out of the circle, feet dragging
as he spat up the thick blood and rolled his head over on one side.
He was dizzy when they brought him back and set him among them.
But they themselves went and carried off the two-handled goblet.
Now Peleides set forth the prizes for the third contest
for the painful wrestling, at once, and displayed them before the Danaans.
There was a great tripod, to set over fire, for the winner.
The Achaians among themselves valued it at the worth of twelve oxen.
But for the beaten man he set in their midst a woman
skilled in much work of her hands, and they rated her at four oxen.
He stood upright and spoke his word out among the Argives:
'Rise up, two who would endeavour this prize.' So he spoke
and presently there rose up huge Telamonian Aias,
and resourceful Odysseus rose, who was versed in every advantage.
The two men, girt up, strode out into the midst of the circle,
and grappled each other in the hook of their heavy arms, as when
rafters lock, when a renowned architect has fitted them
in the roof of a high house to keep out the force of the winds' spite.
Their backs creaked under stress of violent hands that tugged them
stubbornly, and the running sweat broke out, and raw places
frequent all along their ribs and their shoulders broke out
bright red with blood, as both of them kept up their hard efforts
for success and the prize of the wrought tripod. Neither Odysseus
was able to bring Aias down or throw him to the ground, nor
could Aias, but the great strength of Odysseus held out against him.
But now as they made the strong-greaved Achaians begin to be restless,
at last great Telamonian Aias said to the other:
'Son of Laertes and seed of Zeus, resourceful Odysseus:
lift me, or I will lift you. All success shall be as Zeus gives it.'
He spoke, and heaved; but not forgetting his craft Odysseus
caught him with a stroke behind the hollow of the knee, and unnerved
the tendons, and threw him over backward, so that Odysseus
fell on his chest as the people gazed upon them and wondered.
Next, brilliant much-enduring Odysseus endeavoured to lift him
and budged him a little from the ground, but still could not raise him
clear, then hooked a knee behind, so that both of them went down
together to the ground, and lay close, and were soiled in the dust. Then
they would have sprung to their feet once more and wrestled a third fall,
had not Achilleus himself stood up and spoken to stop them:

'Wrestle no more now; do not wear yourselves out and get hurt.
You have both won. Therefore take the prizes in equal division
and retire, so the rest of the Achaians can have their contests.'
So he spoke, and they listened close to him and obeyed him
and wiped the dust away from their bodies, and put on their tunics.
At once the son of Peleus set out prizes for the foot-race:
a mixing-bowl of silver, a work of art, which held only
six measures, but for its loveliness it surpassed all others
on earth by far, since skilled Sidonian craftsmen had wrought it
well, and Phoenicians carried it over the misty face of the water
and set it in the harbour, and gave it for a present to Thoas.
Euneos, son of Jason, gave it to the hero Patroklos
to buy Lykaon, Priam's son, out of slavery, and now
Achilleus made it a prize in memory of his companion,
for that man who should prove in the speed of his feet to run lightest.
For second place he set out a great ox with fat deep upon him,
and for the last runner half a talent's weight of gold. He stood
upright then and spoke his word out among the Argives:
'Rise up, you who would endeavour this prize.' So he spoke
and presently there rose up swift Aias, the son of Oïleus,
and Odysseus the resourceful rose up, and after him Nestor's
son, Antilochos, the best runner among all the young men.
They stood in line for the start, and Achilleus showed them the turn-post.
The field was strung out from the scratch, and not long afterwards
Oïleus' son was out in front, but brilliant Odysseus
overhauled him close, as near as to the breast of a woman
fair-girdled is the rod she pulls in her hands carefully
as she draws the spool out and along the warp, and holds it
close to her chest. So Odysseus ran close up, but behind him,
and his feet were hitting the other's tracks before the dust settled.
Great Odysseus was breathing on the back of the head of Aias
as he ran and held his speed, and all the Achaians were shouting
for his effort to win, and hallooed him hard along in his running.
But as they were running the last part of the race, then Odysseus
said a prayer inside his own mind to grey-eyed Athene:
'Hear me, goddess; be kind; and come with strength for my footsteps.'
So he spoke in prayer, and Pallas Athene heard him.
She made his limbs light, both his feet and the hands above them.
Now as they were for making their final sprint for the trophy,
there Aias slipped in his running, for Athene unbalanced him,
where dung was scattered on the ground from the bellowing oxen
slaughtered
by swift-footed Achilleus, those he slew to honour Patroklos;
and his mouth and nose were filled with the cow dung, so that Odysseus
the great and much enduring took off the mixing-bowl, seeing
he had passed him and come in first, and the ox went to glorious Aias.
He stood there holding in his hands the horn of the field-ox,
spitting the dung from his mouth, and spoke his word to the Argives:
'Ah, now! That goddess made me slip on my feet, who has always
stood over Odysseus like a mother, and taken good care of him.'
He spoke, and all the rest of them laughed happily at him.
In turn Antilochos took up prize for last place, and carried it
off, and grinning spoke his word out among the Argives:

'Friends, you all know well what I tell you, that still the immortals
continue to favour the elder men. For see now, Aias
is elder than I, if only by a little, but this man
is out of another age than ours and one of the ancients.
But his, they say, is a green old age. It would be a hard thing
for any Achaian to match his speed. Except for Achilleus.'
So he spoke, and glorified the swift-footed Peleion.
And Achilleus gave him an answer for what he said, and spoke to him:
'Antilochos, your good word for me shall not have been spoken
in vain. I shall give you another half-talent of gold in addition.'
He spoke, and put it in Antilochos' hands, who received it joyfully.
Then the son of Peleus carried into the circle and set down
a far-shadowing spear, and set down beside it a shield and a helmet:
the armour of Sarpedon, that Patroklos stripped from his body.
He stood upright and spoke his word out among the Argives:
'We invite two men, the best among you, to contend for these prizes.
Let them draw their armour upon them and take up the rending bronze spears
and stand up to each other in the trial of close combat. The fighter
who is first of the two to get in a stroke at the other's fair body,
to get through armour and dark blood and reach to the vitals,
to that man I will give this magnificent silver-nailed
sword of Thrace I stripped from the body of Asteropaios.
But let both men carry off this armour and have it in common;
and we shall set out a brave dinner before them both in our shelters.'
So he spoke, and there rose up huge Telamonian Aias,
and next the son of Tydeus rose up, strong Diomedes.
When these were in their armour on either side of the assembly,
they came together in the middle space, furious for the combat,
with dangerous looks, and wonder settled on all the Achaians.
Then as, moving forward, the two were closing in on each other,
there were three charges, three times they swept in close. Then Aias
stabbed at Diomedes' shield on its perfect circle
but did not get through to the skin, for the corselet inside it guarded him.
The son of Tydeus, over the top of the huge shield, was always
menacing the neck of Aias with the point of the shining
spear, but when the Achaians saw it in fear for Aias
they called for them to stop and divide the prizes evenly.
But the hero Achilleus carried the great sword, with its scabbard
and carefully cut sword belt, and gave it to Diomedes.
Now the son of Peleus set in place a lump of pig-iron
which had once been the throwing-weight of Eëtion in his great strength;
but now swift-footed brilliant Achilleus had slain him and taken
the weight away in the ships along with the other possessions.
He stood upright and spoke his word out among the Argives:
'Rise up, you who would endeavour to win this prize also.
For although the rich demesnes of him who wins it lie far off
indeed, yet for the succession of five years he will have it
to use; for his shepherd for want of iron will not have to go in
to the city for it, nor his ploughman either. This will supply them.'
So he spoke, and up stood Polypoites the stubborn in battle,
and Leonteus in his great strength, a godlike man, and there rose up
Aias, the son of Telamon, and brilliant Epeios.

They stood in order to throw, and great Epeios took up the weight
and whirled and threw it, and all the Achaians laughed when they saw
him.
Second to throw in turn was Leonteus, scion of Ares,
and third in turn huge Telamonian Aias threw it
from his ponderous hand, and overpassed the marks of all others.
But when Polypoites stubborn in battle caught up the iron,
he overthrew the entire field by as far as an ox-herd
can cast with his throwing stick which spins through the air and comes down
where the cattle graze in their herds, and all the Achaians applauded,
and the companions of powerful Polypoites uprising
carried the prize of the king away to the hollow vessels.
But Achilleus set gloomy iron forth once more, for the archers.
He set ten double-bladed axes forth, ten with single
blades, and planted far away on the sands the mast pole
of a dark-prowed ship, and tethered a tremulous wild pigeon to it
by a thin string attached to her foot, then challenged the archers
to shoot at her: 'Now let the man who hits the wild pigeon
take up and carry away home with him all the full axes.
But if one should miss the bird and still hit the string, that man,
seeing that he is the loser, still shall have the half-axes.'
So he spoke, and there rose up in his strength the lord Teukros,
and Meriones rose up, Idomeneus' powerful henchman.
They chose their lots, and shook them up in a brazen helmet,
and Teukros was allotted first place to shoot. He let fly
a strong-shot arrow, but did not promise the lord of archery
that he would accomplish for him a grand sacrifice of lambs first born.
He missed the bird, for Apollo begrudged him that, but he did hit
the string beside the foot where the bird was tied, and the tearing
arrow went straight through and cut the string, and the pigeon
soared swift up toward the sky, while the string dropped and dangled
toward the ground. But still the Achaians thundered approval.
Meriones in a fury of haste caught the bow from his hand,
but had had out an arrow before, while Teukros was aiming,
and forthwith promised to the one who strikes from afar, Apollo,
that he would accomplish for him a grand sacrifice of lambs first born.
Way up under the clouds he saw the tremulous wild dove
and as she circled struck her under the wing in the body
and the shaft passed clean through and out of her, so that it dropped back
and stuck in the ground beside the foot of Meriones, but the bird
dropped and fell on top of the mast of the dark-prowed vessel
and drooped her neck and the beating wings went slack, and the spirit
of life fled swift away from her limbs. Far down from the mast peak
she dropped to earth. And the people gazed upon it and wondered.
Then Meriones gathered up all ten double axes,
but Teukros carried the half-axes back to the hollow ships.
Then the son of Peleus carried into the circle and set down
a far-shadowing spear and an unfired cauldron with patterns
of flowers on it, the worth of an ox. And the spear-throwers rose up.
The son of Atreus rose, wide-powerful Agamemnon,
and Meriones rose up, Idomeneus' powerful henchman.
But now among them spoke swift-footed brilliant Achilleus:
'Son of Atreus, for we know how much you surpass all others,

by how much you are greatest for strength among the spear-throwers,
therefore take this prize and keep it and go back to your hollow
ships; but let us give the spear to the hero Meriones;
if your own heart would have it this way, for so I invite you.'
He spoke, nor did Agamemnon lord of men disobey him.
The hero gave the bronze spear to Meriones, and thereafter
handed his prize, surpassingly lovely, to the herald Talthybios.

Reading 1.5 Homer, *The Iliad*, Book 24

(Source: Lattimore, R. (trans.) (1961) *The Iliad of Homer*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, pp.475–96)

And the games broke up, and the people scattered to go away, each man
to his fast-running ship, and the rest of them took thought of their dinner
and of sweet sleep and its enjoyment; only Achilleus
wept still as he remembered his beloved companion, nor did sleep
who subdues all come over him, but he tossed from one side to the other
in longing for Patroklos, for his manhood and his great strength
and all the actions he had seen to the end with him, and the hardships
he had suffered; the wars of men; hard crossing of the big waters.
Remembering all these things he let fall the swelling tears, lying
sometimes along his side, sometimes on his back, and now again
prone on his face; then he would stand upright, and pace turning
in distraction along the beach of the sea, nor did dawn rising
escape him as she brightened across the sea and the beaches.
Then, when he had yoked running horses under the chariot
he would fasten Hektor behind the chariot, so as to drag him,
and draw him three times around the tomb of Menoitios' fallen
son, then rest again in his shelter, and throw down the dead man
and leave him to lie sprawled on his face in the dust. But Apollo
had pity on him, though he was only a dead man, and guarded
the body from all ugliness, and hid all of it under the golden
aegis, so that it might not be torn when Achilleus dragged it.
So Achilleus in his standing fury outraged great Hektor.
The blessed gods as they looked upon him were filled with compassion
and kept urging clear-sighted Argeïphontes to steal the body.
There this was pleasing to all the others, but never to Hera
nor Poseidon, nor the girl of the grey eyes, who kept still
their hatred for sacred Ilion as in the beginning,
and for Priam and his people, because of the delusion of Paris
who insulted the goddesses when they came to him in his courtyard
and favoured her who supplied the lust that led to disaster.
But now, as it was the twelfth dawn after the death of Hektor,
Phoibos Apollo spoke his word out among the immortals:
'You are hard, you gods, and destructive. Now did not Hektor
burn thigh pieces of oxen and unblemished goats in your honour?
Now you cannot bring yourselves to save him, though he is only
a corpse, for his wife to look upon, his child and his mother
and Priam his father, and his people, who presently thereafter
would burn his body in the fire and give him his rites of burial.
No, you gods; your desire is to help this cursed Achilleus
within whose breast there are no feelings of justice, nor can
his mind be bent, but his purposes are fierce, like a lion

who when he has given way to his own great strength and his haughty
spirit, goes among the flocks of men, to devour them.
So Achilleus has destroyed pity, and there is not in him
any shame; which does much harm to men but profits them also.
For a man must some day lose one who was even closer
than this; a brother from the same womb, or a son. And yet
he weeps for him, and sorrows for him, and then it is over,
for the Destinies put in mortal men the heart of endurance.
But this man, now he has torn the heart of life from great Hektor,
ties him to his horses and drags him around his beloved companion's
tomb; and nothing is gained thereby for his good, or his honour.
Great as he is, let him take care not to make us angry;
for see, he does dishonour to the dumb earth in his fury.'
Then bitterly Hera of the white arms answered him, saying:
'What you have said could be true, lord of the silver bow, only
if you give Hektor such pride of place as you give to Achilleus.
But Hektor was mortal, and suckled at the breast of a woman,
while Achilleus is the child of a goddess, one whom I myself
nourished and brought up and gave her as bride to her husband
Peleus, one dear to the hearts of the immortals, for you all
went, you gods, to the wedding; and you too feasted among them
and held your lyre, o friend of the evil, faithless forever.'
In turn Zeus who gathers the clouds spoke to her in answer:
'Hera, be not utterly angry with the gods, for there shall not
be the same pride of place given both. Yet Hektor also
was loved by the gods, best of all the mortals in Ilion.
I loved him too. He never failed of gifts to my liking.
Never yet has my altar gone without fair sacrifice,
the smoke and the savour of it, since that is our portion of honour.
The stealing of him we will dismiss, for it is not possible
to take bold Hektor secretly from Achilleus, since always
his mother is near him night and day; but it would be better
if one of the gods would summon Thetis here to my presence
so that I can say a close word to her, and see that Achilleus
is given gifts by Priam and gives back the body of Hektor.'
He spoke, and Iris storm-footed sprang away with the message,
and at a point between Samos and Imbros of the high cliffs
plunged in the dark water, and the sea crashed moaning about her.
She plummeted to the sea floor like a lead weight which, mounted
along the horn of an ox who ranges the fields, goes downward
and takes death with it to the raw-ravening fish. She found Thetis
inside the hollow of her cave, and gathered about her
sat the rest of the sea goddesses, and she in their midst
was mourning the death of her blameless son, who so soon was destined
to die in Troy of the rich soil, far from the land of his fathers.
Iris the swift-foot came close beside her and spoke to her:
'Rise, Thetis. Zeus whose purposes are infinite calls you.'
In turn Thetis the goddess, the silver-footed, answered her:
'What does he, the great god, want with me? I feel shamefast
to mingle with the immortals, and my heart is confused with sorrows.
But I will go. No word shall be in vain, if he says it.'
So she spoke, and shining among the divinities took up
her black veil, and there is no darker garment. She went

on her way, and in front of her rapid wind-footed Iris
guided her, and the wave of the water opened about them.
They stepped out on the dry land and swept to the sky. There they found
the son of Kronos of the wide brows, and gathered about him
sat all the rest of the gods, the blessed, who live forever.
She sat down beside Zeus father, and Athene made a place for her.
Hera put into her hand a beautiful golden goblet
and spoke to her to comfort her, and Thetis accepting drank from it.
The father of gods and men began the discourse among them:
'You have come to Olympos, divine Thetis, for all your sorrow,
with an unforgotten grief in your heart. I myself know this.
But even so I will tell you why I summoned you hither.
For nine days there has risen a quarrel among the immortals
over the body of Hektor, and Achilleus, stormer of cities.
They keep urging clear-sighted Argeïphontes to steal the body,
but I still put upon Achilleus the honour that he has, guarding
your reverence and your love for me into time afterwards. Go then
in all speed to the encampment and give to your son this message:
tell him that the gods frown upon him, that beyond all other
immortals I myself am angered that in his heart's madness
he holds Hektor beside the curved ships and did not give him
back. Perhaps in fear of me he will give back Hektor.
Then I will send Iris to Priam of the great heart, with an order
to ransom his dear son, going down to the ships of the Achaians
and bringing gifts to Achilleus which might soften his anger.'
He spoke and the goddess silver-foot Thetis did not disobey him
but descended in a flash of speed from the peaks of Olympos
and made her way to the shelter of her son, and there found him
in close lamentation, and his beloved companions about him
were busy at their work and made ready the morning meal, and there
stood a great fleecy sheep being sacrificed in the shelter.
His honoured mother came close to him and sat down beside him,
and stroked him with her hand and called him by name and spoke to him:
'My child, how long will you go on eating your heart out in sorrow
and lamentation, and remember neither your food nor going
to bed? It is a good thing even to lie with a woman
in love. For you will not be with me long, but already
death and powerful destiny stand closely above you.
But listen hard to me, for I come from Zeus with a message.
He says that the gods frown upon you, that beyond all other
immortals he himself is angered that in your heart's madness
you hold Hektor beside the curved ships and did not redeem him.
Come, then, give him up and accept ransom for the body.'
Then in turn Achilleus of the swift feet answered her:
'So be it. He can bring the ransom and take off the body,
if the Olympian himself so urgently bids it.'
So, where the ships were drawn together, the son and his mother
conversed at long length in winged words. But the son of Kronos
stirred Iris to go down to sacred Ilion, saying:
'Go forth, Iris the swift, leaving your place on Olympos,
and go to Priam of the great heart within Ilion, tell him
to ransom his dear son, going down to the ships of the Achaians
and bringing gifts to Achilleus which might soften his anger:

alone, let no other man of the Trojans go with him, but only
let one elder herald attend him, one who can manage
the mules and the easily running wagon, so he can carry
the dead man, whom great Achilleus slew, back to the city.
Let death not be a thought in his heart, let him have no fear;
such an escort shall I send to guide him, Argeïphontes
who shall lead him until he brings him to Achilleus. And after
he has brought him inside the shelter of Achilleus, neither
will the man himself kill him, but will hold back all the others,
for he is no witless man nor unwatchful, nor is he wicked,
but will in all kindness spare one who comes to him as a suppliant.'
He spoke, and storm-footed Iris swept away with the message
and came to the house of Priam. There she found outcry and mourning.
The sons sitting around their father inside the courtyard
made their clothes sodden with their tears, and among them the old man
sat veiled, beaten into his mantle. Dung lay thick
on the head and neck of the aged man, for he had been rolling
in it, he had gathered and smeared it on with his hands. And his daughters
all up and down the house and the wives of his sons were mourning
as they remembered all those men in their numbers and valour
who lay dead, their lives perished at the hands of the Argives.
The messenger of Zeus stood beside Priam and spoke to him
in a small voice, and yet the shivers took hold of his body:
'Take heart, Priam, son of Dardanos, do not be frightened.
I come to you not eyeing you with evil intention
but with the purpose of good toward you. I am a messenger
of Zeus, who far away cares much for you and is pitiful.
The Olympian orders you to ransom Hektor the brilliant,
to bring gifts to Achilleus which may soften his anger:
alone, let no other man of the Trojans go with you, but only
let one elder herald attend you, one who can manage
the mules and the easily running wagon, so he can carry
the dead man, whom great Achilleus slew, back to the city.
Let death not be a thought in your heart, you need have no fear,
such an escort shall go with you to guide you, Argeïphontes
who will lead you till he brings you to Achilleus. And after
he has brought you inside the shelter of Achilleus, neither
will the man himself kill you but will hold back all the others;
for he is no witless man nor unwatchful, nor is he wicked
but will in all kindness spare one who comes to him as a suppliant.'
So Iris the swift-footed spoke and went away from him.
Thereupon he ordered his sons to make ready the easily rolling
mule wagon, and to fasten upon it the carrying basket.
He himself went into the storeroom, which was fragrant
and of cedar, and high-ceilinged, with many bright treasures inside it.
He called out to Hekabe his wife, and said to her:
'Dear wife, a messenger came to me from Zeus on Olympos,
that I must go to the ships of the Achaians and ransom my dear son,
bringing gifts to Achilleus which may soften his anger.
Come then, tell me. What does it seem best to your own mind
for me to do? My heart, my strength are terribly urgent
that I go there to the ships within the wide army of the Achaians.'
So he spoke, and his wife cried out aloud, and answered him:

'Ah me, where has that wisdom gone for which you were famous
in time before, among outlanders and those you rule over?
How can you wish to go alone to the ships of the Achaians
before the eyes of a man who has slaughtered in such numbers
such brave sons of yours? The heart in you is iron. For if
he has you within his grasp and lays eyes upon you, that man
who is savage and not to be trusted will not take pity upon you
nor have respect for your rights. Let us sit apart in our palace
now, and weep for Hektor, and the way at the first strong Destiny
spun with his life line when he was born, when I gave birth to him,
that the dogs with their shifting feet should feed on him, far from his parents,
gone down before a stronger man; I wish I could set teeth
in the middle of his liver and eat it. That would be vengeance
for what he did to my son; for he slew him when he was no coward
but standing before the men of Troy and the deep-girdled women
of Troy, with no thought in his mind of flight or withdrawal.'

In turn the aged Priam, the godlike, answered her saying:
'Do not hold me back when I would be going, neither yourself be
a bird of bad omen in my palace. You will not persuade me.
If it had been some other who ordered me, one of the mortals,
one of those who are soothsayers, or priests, or diviners,
I might have called it a lie and we might rather have rejected it.
But now, for I myself heard the god and looked straight upon her,
I am going, and this word shall not be in vain. If it is my destiny
to die there by the ships of the bronze-armoured Achaians,
then I wish that. Achilleus can slay me at once, with my own son
caught in my arms, once I have my fill of mourning above him.'

He spoke, and lifted back the fair covering of his clothes-chest
and from inside took out twelve robes surpassingly lovely
and twelve mantles to be worn single, as many blankets,
as many great white cloaks, also the same number of tunics.
He weighed and carried out ten full talents of gold, and brought forth
two shining tripods, and four cauldrons, and brought out a goblet
of surpassing loveliness that the men of Thrace had given him
when he went to them with a message, but now the old man spared not
even this in his halls, so much was it his heart's desire
to ransom back his beloved son. But he drove off the Trojans
all from his cloister walks, scolding them with words of revilement:
'Get out, you failures, you disgraces. Have you not also
mourning of your own at home that you come to me with your sorrows?
Is it not enough that Zeus, son of Kronos, has given me sorrow
in losing the best of my sons? You also shall be aware of this
since you will be all the easier for the Achaians to slaughter
now he is dead. But, for myself, before my eyes look
upon this city as it is destroyed and its people are slaughtered,
my wish is to go sooner down to the house of the death god.'

He spoke, and went after the men with a stick, and they fled outside
before the fury of the old man. He was scolding his children
and cursing Helenos, and Paris, Agathon the brilliant,
Pammon and Antiphonos, Polites of the great war cry,
Deïphobos and Hippothoös and proud Dios. There were nine
sons to whom now the old man gave orders and spoke to them roughly:
'Make haste, wicked children, my disgraces. I wish all of you

had been killed beside the running ships in the place of Hektor.
Ah me, for my evil destiny. I have had the noblest
of sons in Troy, but I say not one of them is left to me,
Mestor like a god and Troilos whose delight was in horses,
and Hektor, who was a god among men, for he did not seem like
one who was child of a mortal man, but of a god. All these
Ares has killed, and all that are left me are the disgraces,
the liars and the dancers, champions of the chorus, the plunderers
of their own people in their land of lambs and kids. Well then,
will you not get my wagon ready and be quick about it,
and put all these things on it, so we can get on with our journey?'
So he spoke, and they in terror at the old man's scolding
hauled out the easily running wagon for mules, a fine thing
new-fabricated, and fastened the carrying basket upon it.
They took away from its peg the mule yoke made of boxwood
with its massive knob, well fitted with guiding rings, and brought forth
the yoke lashing (together with the yoke itself) of nine cubits
and snugged it well into place upon the smooth-polished wagon-pole
at the foot of the beam, then slipped the ring over the peg, and lashed it
with three turns on either side to the knob, and afterwards
fastened it all in order and secured it under a hooked guard.
Then they carried out and piled into the smooth-polished mule wagon
all the unnumbered spoils to be given for the head of Hektor,
then yoked the powerful-footed mules who pulled in the harness
and whom the Mysians gave once as glorious presents to Priam;
but for Priam they led under the yoke those horses the old man
himself had kept, and cared for them at his polished manger.
Now in the high house the yoking was done for the herald
and Priam, men both with close counsels in their minds. And now came
Hekabe with sorrowful heart and stood close beside them
carrying in her right hand the kind, sweet wine in a golden
goblet, so that before they went they might pour a drink-offering.
She stood in front of the horses, called Priam by name and spoke to him:
'Here, pour a libation to Zeus father, and pray you may come back
home again from those who hate you, since it seems the spirit
within you drives you upon the ships, though I would not have it.
Make your prayer then to the dark-misted, the son of Kronos
on Ida, who looks out on all the Troad, and ask him
for a bird of omen, a rapid messenger, which to his own mind
is dearest of all birds and his strength is the biggest, one seen
on the right, so that once your eyes have rested upon him
you can trust in him and go to the ships of the fast-mounted Danaans.
But if Zeus of the wide brows will not grant you his own messenger,
then I, for one, would never urge you on nor advise you
to go to the Argive ships, for all your passion to do it.'
Then in answer to her again spoke Priam the godlike:
'My lady, I will not disregard this wherein you urge me.
It is well to lift hands to Zeus and ask if he will have mercy.'
The old man spoke, and told the housekeeper who attended them
to pour unstained water over his hands. She standing beside them
and serving them held the washing-bowl in her hands, and a pitcher.
He washed his hands and took the cup from his wife. He stood up
in the middle of the enclosure, and prayed, and poured the wine out

looking up into the sky, and gave utterance and spoke, saying:
'Father Zeus, watching over us from Ida, most high, most honoured:
grant that I come to Achilleus for love and pity; but send me
a bird of omen, a rapid messenger which to your own mind
is dearest of all birds and his strength is biggest, one seen
on the right, so that once my eyes have rested upon him
I may trust in him and go to the ships of the fast-mounted Danaans.'
So he spoke in prayer, and Zeus of the counsels heard him.
Straightway he sent down the most lordly of birds, an eagle,
the dark one, the marauder, called as well the black eagle.
And as big as is the build of the door to a towering chamber
in the house of a rich man, strongly fitted with bars, of such size
was the spread of his wings on either side. He swept through the city
appearing on the right hand, and the people looking upon him
were uplifted and the hearts made glad in the breasts of all of them.
Now in urgent haste the old man mounted into his chariot
and drove out through the forecourt and the thundering close. Before him
the mules hauled the wagon on its four wheels, Idaios
the sober-minded driving them, and behind him the horses
came on as the old man laid the lash upon them and urged them
rapidly through the town, and all his kinsmen were following
much lamenting, as if he went to his death. When the two men
had gone down through the city, and out, and come to the flat land,
the rest of them turned back to go to Ilion, the sons
and the sons-in-law. And Zeus of the wide brows failed not to notice
the two as they showed in the plain. He saw the old man and took pity
upon him, and spoke directly to his beloved son, Hermes:
'Hermes, for to you beyond all other gods it is dearest
to be man's companion, and you listen to whom you will, go now
on your way, and so guide Priam inside the hollow ships
of the Achaians, that no man shall see him, none be aware of him,
of the other Danaans, till he has come to the son of Peleus.'
He spoke, nor disobeyed him the courier, Argeïphontes.
Immediately he bound upon his feet the fair sandals
golden and immortal, that carried him over the water
as over the dry land of the main abreast of the wind's blast.
He caught up the staff, with which he mazes the eyes of those mortals
whose eyes he would maze, or wakes again the sleepers. Holding
this in his hands, strong Argeïphontes winged his way onward
until he came suddenly to Troy and the Hellespont, and there
walked on, and there took the likeness of a young man, a noble,
with beard new grown, which is the most graceful time of young manhood.
Now when the two had driven past the great tomb of Ilos
they stayed their mules and horses to water them in the river,
for by this time darkness had descended on the land; and the herald
made out Hermes, who was coming toward them at a short distance.
He lifted his voice and spoke aloud to Priam: 'Take thought,
son of Dardanos. Here is work for a mind that is careful.
I see a man; I think he will presently tear us to pieces.
Come then, let us run away with our horses, or if not, then
clasp his knees and entreat him to have mercy upon us.'
So he spoke, and the old man's mind was confused, he was badly
frightened, and the hairs stood up all over his gnarled body

and he stood staring, but the kindly god himself coming closer
took the old man's hand, and spoke to him and asked him a question:
'Where, my father, are you thus guiding your mules and horses
through the immortal night while other mortals are sleeping?
Have you no fear of the Achaians whose wind is fury,
who hate you, who are your enemies, and are near? For if one
of these were to see you, how you are conveying so many
treasures through the swift black night, what then could you think of?
You are not young yourself, and he who attends you is aged
for beating off any man who might pick a quarrel with you.
But I will do you no harm myself, I will even keep off
another who would. You seem to me like a beloved father.'
In answer to him again spoke aged Priam the godlike:
'Yes, in truth, dear child, all this is much as you tell me;
yet still there is some god who has held his hand above me,
who sent such a wayfarer as you to meet me, an omen
of good, for such you are by your form, your admired beauty
and the wisdom in your mind. Your parents are fortunate in you.'
Then in turn answered him the courier Argeïphontes:
'Yes, old sir, all this that you said is fair and orderly.
But come, tell me this thing and recite it to me accurately.
Can it be you convey these treasures in all their numbers and beauty
to outland men, so that they can be still kept safe for you?
Or are all of you by now abandoning sacred Ilion
in fear, such a one was he who died, the best man among you,
your son; who was never wanting when you fought against the Achaians.'
In answer to him again spoke aged Priam the godlike:
'But who are you, o best of men, and who are your parents?
Since you spoke of my ill-starred son's death, and with honour.'
Then in turn answered him the courier Argeïphontes:
'You try me out, aged sir. You ask me of glorious Hektor
whom many a time my eyes have seen in the fighting where men win
glory, as also on that time when he drove back the Argives
on their ships and kept killing them with the stroke of the sharp bronze,
and we stood by and wondered at him; for then Achilleus
would not let us fight by reason of his anger at Agamemnon.
For I am Achilleus' henchman, and the same strong-wrought vessel
brought us here; and I am a Myrmidon, and my father
is Polyktor; a man of substance, but aged, as you are.
He has six sons beside, and I am the seventh, and I shook
lots with the others, and it was my lot to come on this venture.
But now I have come to the plain away from the ships, for at daybreak
the glancing-eyed Achaians will do battle around the city.
They chafe from sitting here too long, nor have the Achaians'
kings the strength to hold them back as they break for the fighting.'
In answer to him again spoke aged Priam the godlike:
'If then you are henchman to Peleïd Achilleus,
come, tell me the entire truth, and whether my son lies
still beside the ships, or whether by now he has been hewn
limb from limb and thrown before the dogs by Achilleus.'
Then in turn answered him the courier Argeïphontes:
'Aged sir, neither have any dogs eaten him, nor have
the birds, but he lies yet beside the ship of Achilleus

at the shelters, and as he was; now here is the twelfth dawn
he has lain there, nor does his flesh decay, nor do worms feed
on him, they who devour men who have fallen in battle.
It is true, Achilleus drags him at random around his beloved
companion's tomb, as dawn on dawn appears, yet he cannot
mutilate him; you yourself can see when you go there
how fresh with dew he lies, and the blood is all washed from him,
nor is there any corruption, and all the wounds have been closed up
where he was struck, since many drove the bronze in his body.
So it is that the blessed immortals care for your son, though
he is nothing but a dead man; because in their hearts they loved him.'

He spoke, and the old man was made joyful and answered him, saying:
'My child, surely it is good to give the immortals
their due gifts; because my own son, if ever I had one,
never forgot in his halls the gods who live on Olympos.
Therefore they remembered him even in death's stage. Come, then,
accept at my hands this beautiful drinking-cup, and give me
protection for my body, and with the gods' grace be my escort
until I make my way to the shelter of the son of Peleus.'

In turn answered him the courier Argeïphontes:
'You try me out, aged sir, for I am young, but you will not
persuade me, telling me to accept your gifts when Achilleus
does not know. I fear him at heart and have too much reverence
to rob him. Such a thing might be to my sorrow hereafter.
But I would be your escort and take good care of you, even
till I came to glorious Argos in a fast ship or following
on foot, and none would fight you because he despised your escort.'

The kind god spoke, and sprang up behind the horses and into
the chariot, and rapidly caught in his hands the lash and the guide reins,
and breathed great strength into the mules and horses. Now after
they had got to the fortifications about the ships, and the ditch, there
were sentries, who had just begun to make ready their dinner,
but about these the courier Argeïphontes drifted
sleep, on all, and quickly opened the gate, and shoved back
the door-bars, and brought in Priam and the glorious gifts on the wagon.
But when they had got to the shelter of Peleus' son: a towering
shelter the Myrmidons had built for their king, hewing
the timbers of pine, and they made a roof of thatch above it
shaggy with grass that they had gathered out of the meadows;
and around it made a great courtyard for their king, with hedgepoles
set close together; the gate was secured by a single door-piece
of pine, and three Achaians could ram it home in its socket
and three could pull back and open the huge door-bar; three other
Achaians, that is, but Achilleus all by himself could close it.
At this time Hermes, the kind god, opened the gate for the old man
and brought in the glorious gifts for Peleus' son, the swift-footed,
and dismounted to the ground from behind the horses, and spoke forth:
'Aged sir, I who came to you am a god immortal,
Hermes. My father sent me down to guide and go with you.
But now I am going back again, and I will not go in
before the eyes of Achilleus, for it would make others angry
for an immortal god so to face mortal men with favour.
But go you in yourself and clasp the knees of Peleion

and entreat him in the name of his father, the name of his mother
of the lovely hair, and his child, and so move the spirit within him.'
So Hermes spoke, and went away to the height of Olympos,
but Priam vaulted down to the ground from behind the horses
and left Idaios where he was, for he stayed behind, holding
in hand the horses and mules. The old man made straight for the dwelling
where Achilleus the beloved of Zeus was sitting. He found him
inside, and his companions were sitting apart, as two only,
Automedon the hero and Alkimos, scion of Ares,
were busy beside him. He had just now got through with his dinner,
with eating and drinking, and the table still stood by. Tall Priam
came in unseen by the other men and stood close beside him
and caught the knees of Achilleus in his arms, and kissed the hands
that were dangerous and manslaughtering and had killed so many
of his sons. As when dense disaster closes on one who has murdered
a man in his own land, and he comes to the country of others,
to a man of substance, and wonder seizes on those who behold him,
so Achilleus wondered as he looked on Priam, a godlike
man, and the rest of them wondered also, and looked at each other.
But now Priam spoke to him in the words of a suppliant:
'Achilleus like the gods, remember your father, one who
is of years like mine, and on the door-sill of sorrowful old age.
And they who dwell nearby encompass him and afflict him,
nor is there any to defend him against the wrath, the destruction.
Yet surely he, when he hears of you and that you are still living,
is gladdened within his heart and all his days he is hopeful
that he will see his beloved son come home from the Troad.
But for me, my destiny was evil. I have had the noblest
of sons in Troy, but I say not one of them is left to me.
Fifty were my sons, when the sons of the Achaians came here.
Nineteen were born to me from the womb of a single mother,
and other women bore the rest in my palace; and of these
violent Ares broke the strength in the knees of most of them,
but one was left me who guarded my city and people, that one
you killed a few days since as he fought in defence of his country,
Hektor; for whose sake I come now to the ships of the Achaians
to win him back from you, and I bring you gifts beyond number.
Honour then the gods, Achilleus, and take pity upon me
remembering your father, yet I am still more pitiful;
I have gone through what no other mortal on earth has gone through;
I put my lips to the hands of the man who has killed my children.'
So he spoke, and stirred in the other a passion of grieving
for his own father. He took the old man's hand and pushed him
gently away, and the two remembered, as Priam sat huddled
at the feet of Achilleus and wept close for manslaughtering Hektor
and Achilleus wept now for his own father, now again
for Patroklos. The sound of their mourning moved in the house. Then
when great Achilleus had taken full satisfaction in sorrow
and the passion for it had gone from his mind and body, thereafter
he rose from his chair, and took the old man by the hand, and set him
on his feet again, in pity for the grey head and the grey beard,
and spoke to him and addressed him in winged words: 'Ah, unlucky,
surely you have had much evil to endure in your spirit.

How could you dare to come alone to the ships of the Achaians
and before my eyes, when I am one who have killed in such numbers
such brave sons of yours? The heart in you is iron. Come, then,
and sit down upon this chair, and you and I will even let
our sorrows lie still in the heart for all our grieving. There is not
any advantage to be won from grim lamentation.
Such is the way the gods spun life for unfortunate mortals,
that we live in unhappiness, but the gods themselves have no sorrows.
There are two urns that stand on the door-sill of Zeus. They are unlike
for the gifts they bestow: an urn of evils, an urn of blessings.
If Zeus who delights in thunder mingles these and bestows them
on man, he shifts, and moves now in evil, again in good fortune.
But when Zeus bestows from the urn of sorrows, he makes a failure
of man, and the evil hunger drives him over the shining
earth, and he wanders respected neither of gods nor mortals.
Such were the shining gifts given by the gods to Peleus
from his birth, who outshone all men beside for his riches
and pride of possession, and was lord over the Myrmidons. Thereto
the gods bestowed an immortal wife on him, who was mortal.
But even on him the god piled evil also. There was not
any generation of strong sons born to him in his great house
but a single all-untimely child he had, and I give him
no care as he grows old, since far from the land of my fathers
I sit here in Troy, and bring nothing but sorrow to you and your children.
And you, old sir, we are told you prospered once; for as much
as Lesbos, Makar's hold, confines to the north above it
and Phrygia from the north confines, and enormous Hellespont,
of these, old sir, you were lord once in your wealth and your children.
But now the Uranian gods brought us, an affliction upon you,
forever there is fighting about your city, and men killed.
But bear up, nor mourn endlessly in your heart, for there is not
anything to be gained from grief for your son; you will never
bring him back; sooner you must go through yet another sorrow.'

In answer to him again spoke aged Priam the godlike:
'Do not, beloved of Zeus, make me sit on a chair while Hektor
lies yet forlorn among the shelters; rather with all speed
give him back, so my eyes may behold him, and accept the ransom
we bring you, which is great. You may have joy of it, and go back
to the land of your own fathers since once you have permitted me
to go on living myself and continue to look on the sunlight.'

Then looking darkly at him spoke swift-footed Achilleus:
'No longer stir me up, old sir. I myself am minded
to give Hektor back to you. A messenger came to me from Zeus,
my mother, she who bore me, the daughter of the sea's ancient.
I know you, Priam, in my heart, and it does not escape me
that some god led you to the running ships of the Achaians.
For no mortal would dare come to our encampment, not even
one strong in youth. He could not get by the pickets, he could not
lightly unbar the bolt that secures our gateway. Therefore
you must not further make my spirit move in my sorrows,
for fear, old sir, I might not let you alone in my shelter,
suppliant as you are; and be guilty before the god's orders.'

He spoke, and the old man was frightened and did as he told him.

The son of Peleus bounded to the door of the house like a lion,
nor went alone, but the two henchmen followed attending,
the hero Automedon and Alkimos, those whom Achilleus
honoured beyond all companions after Patroklos dead. These two
now set free from under the yoke the mules and the horses,
and led inside the herald, the old king's crier, and gave him
a chair to sit in, then from the smooth-polished mule wagon
lifted out the innumerable spoils for the head of Hektor,
but left inside it two great cloaks and a finespun tunic
to shroud the corpse in when they carried him home. Then Achilleus
called out to his serving-maids to wash the body and anoint it
all over; but take it first aside, since otherwise Priam
might see his son and in the heart's sorrow not hold in his anger
at the sight, and the deep heart in Achilleus be shaken to anger;
that he might not kill Priam and be guilty before the god's orders.
Then when the serving-maids had washed the corpse and anointed it
with olive oil, they threw a fair great cloak and a tunic
about him, and Achilleus himself lifted him and laid him
on a litter, and his friends helped him lift it to the smooth-polished
mule wagon. He groaned then, and called by name on his beloved
companion:
'Be not angry with me, Patroklos, if you discover,
though you be in the house of Hades, that I gave back great Hektor
to his loved father, for the ransom he gave me was not unworthy.
I will give you your share of the spoils, as much as is fitting.'
So spoke great Achilleus and went back into the shelter
and sat down on the elaborate couch from which he had risen,
against the inward wall, and now spoke his word to Priam:
'Your son is given back to you, aged sir, as you asked it.
He lies on a bier. When dawn shows you yourself shall see him
as you take him away. Now you and I must remember our supper.
For even Niobe, she of the lovely tresses, remembered
to eat, whose twelve children were destroyed in her palace,
six daughters, and six sons in the pride of their youth, whom Apollo
killed with arrows from his silver bow, being angered
with Niobe, and shaft-showering Artemis killed the daughters;
because Niobe likened herself to Leto of the fair colouring
and said Leto had borne only two, she herself had borne many;
but the two, though they were only two, destroyed all those others.
Nine days long they lay in their blood, nor was there anyone
to bury them, for the son of Kronos made stones out of
the people; but on the tenth day the Uranian gods buried them.
But she remembered to eat when she was worn out with weeping.
And now somewhere among the rocks, in the lonely mountains,
in Sipylos, where they say is the resting place of the goddesses
who are nymphs, and dance beside the waters of Acheloios,
there, stone still, she broods on the sorrows that the gods gave her.
Come then, we also, aged magnificent sir, must remember
to eat, and afterwards you may take your beloved son back
to Ilion, and mourn for him; and he will be much lamented.'
So spoke fleet Achilleus and sprang to his feet and slaughtered
a gleaming sheep, and his friends skinned it and butchered it fairly,
and cut up the meat expertly into small pieces, and spitted them,

and roasted all carefully and took off the pieces.
Automedon took the bread and set it out on the table
in fair baskets, while Achilleus served the meats. And thereon
they put their hands to the good things that lay ready before them.
But when they had put aside their desire for eating and drinking,
Priam, son of Dardanos, gazed upon Achilleus, wondering
at his size and beauty, for he seemed like an outright vision
of gods. Achilleus in turn gazed on Dardanian Priam
and wondered, as he saw his brave looks and listened to him talking.
But when they had taken their fill of gazing one on the other,
first of the two to speak was the aged man, Priam the godlike:
'Give me, beloved of Zeus, a place to sleep presently, so that
we may even go to bed and take the pleasure of sweet sleep.
For my eyes have not closed underneath my lids since that time
when my son lost his life beneath your hands, but always
I have been grieving and brooding over my numberless sorrows
and wallowed in the muck about my courtyard's enclosure.
Now I have tasted food again and have let the gleaming
wine go down my throat. Before, I had tasted nothing.'

He spoke, and Achilleus ordered his serving-maids and companions
to make a bed in the porch's shelter and to lay upon it
fine underbedding of purple, and spread blankets above it
and fleecy robes to be an over-all covering. The maid-servants
went forth from the main house, and in their hands held torches,
and set to work, and presently had two beds made. Achilleus
of the swift feet now looked at Priam and said, sarcastic:
'Sleep outside, aged sir and good friend, for fear some Achaian
might come in here on a matter of counsel, since they keep coming
and sitting by me and making plans; as they are supposed to.
But if one of these come through the fleeting black night should notice you,
he would go straight and tell Agamemnon, shepherd of the people,
and there would be delay in the ransoming of the body.
But come, tell me this and count off for me exactly
how many days you intend for the burial of great Hektor.
Tell me, so I myself shall stay still and hold back the people.'

In answer to him again spoke aged Priam the godlike:
'If you are willing that we accomplish a complete funeral
for great Hektor, this, Achilleus, is what you could do and give
me pleasure. For you know surely how we are penned in our city,
and wood is far to bring in from the hills, and the Trojans are frightened
badly. Nine days we would keep him in our palace and mourn him,
and bury him on the tenth day, and the people feast by him,
and on the eleventh day we would make the grave-barrow for him,
and on the twelfth day fight again; if so we must do.'

Then in turn swift-footed brilliant Achilleus answered him:
'Then all this, aged Priam, shall be done as you ask it.
I will hold off our attack for as much time as you bid me.'

So he spoke, and took the aged king by the right hand
at the wrist, so that his heart might have no fear. Then these two,
Priam and the herald who were both men of close counsel,
slept in the place outside the house, in the porch's shelter;
but Achilleus slept in the inward corner of the strong-built shelter,
and at his side lay Briseis of the fair colouring.

Now the rest of the gods and men who were lords of chariots
slept nightlong, with the easy bondage of slumber upon them,
only sleep had not caught Hermes the kind god, who pondered
now in his heart the problem of how to escort King Priam
from the ships and not be seen by the devoted gate-wardens.
He stood above his head and spoke a word to him, saying:
'Aged sir, you can have no thought of evil from the way
you sleep still among your enemies now Achilleus has left you
unharmed. You have ransomed now your dear son and given much for
him.
But the sons you left behind would give three times as much ransom
for you, who are alive, were Atreus' son Agamemnon
to recognize you, and all the other Achaians learn of you.'
He spoke, and the old man was afraid, and wakened his herald,
and lightly Hermes harnessed for them the mules and the horses
and himself drove them through the encampment. And no man knew of them.
But when they came to the crossing-place of the fair-running river,
of whirling Xanthos, a stream whose father was Zeus the immortal,
there Hermes left them and went away to the height of Olympos,
and dawn, she of the yellow robe, scattered over all earth,
and they drove their horses on to the city with lamentation
and clamour, while the mules drew the body. Nor was any other
aware of them at the first, no man, no fair-girdled woman,
only Kassandra, a girl like Aphrodite the golden,
who had gone up to the height of the Pergamos. She saw
her dear father standing in the chariot, his herald and crier
with him. She saw Hektor drawn by the mules on a litter.
She cried out then in sorrow and spoke to the entire city:
'Come, men of Troy and Trojan women; look upon Hektor
if ever before you were joyful when you saw him come back living
from battle; for he was a great joy to his city, and all his people.'
She spoke, and there was no man left there in all the city
nor woman, but all were held in sorrow passing endurance.
They met Priam beside the gates as he brought the dead in.
First among them were Hektor's wife and his honoured mother
who tore their hair, and ran up beside the smooth-rolling wagon,
and touched his head. And the multitude, wailing, stood there about them.
And now and there in front of the gates they would have lamented
all day till the sun went down and let fall their tears for Hektor,
except that the old man spoke from the chariot to his people:
'Give me way to get through with my mules; then afterwards
you may sate yourselves with mourning, when I have him inside the palace.'
So he spoke, and they stood apart and made way for the wagon.
And when they had brought him inside the renowned house, they laid him
then on a carved bed, and seated beside him the singers
who were to lead the melody in the dirge, and the singers
chanted the song of sorrow, and the women were mourning beside them.
Andromache of the white arms led the lamentation
of the women, and held in her arms the head of manslaughtering Hektor:
'My husband, you were lost young from life, and have left me
a widow in your house, and the boy is only a baby
who was born to you and me, the unhappy. I think he will never
come of age, for before then head to heel this city

will be sacked, for you, its defender, are gone, you who guarded
the city, and the grave wives, and the innocent children,
wives who before long must go away in the hollow ships,
and among them I shall also go, and you, my child, follow
where I go, and there do much hard work that is unworthy
of you, drudgery for a hard master; or else some Achaian
will take you by hand and hurl you from the tower into horrible
death, in anger because Hektor once killed his brother,
or his father, or his son; there were so many Achaians
whose teeth bit the vast earth, beaten down by the hands of Hektor.
Your father was no merciful man in the horror of battle.
Therefore your people are grieving for you all through their city,
Hektor, and you left for your parents mourning and sorrow
beyond words, but for me passing all others is left the bitterness
and the pain, for you did not die in bed, and stretch your arms to me,
or tell me some last intimate word that I could remember
always, all the nights and days of my weeping for you.'

So she spoke in tears, and the women were mourning about her.
Now Hekabe led out the thronging chant of their sorrow:
'Hektor, of all my sons the dearest by far to my spirit;
while you still lived for me you were dear to the gods, and even
in the stage of death they cared about you still. There were others
of my sons whom at times swift-footed Achilleus captured,
and he would sell them as slaves far across the unresting salt water
into Samos, and Imbros, and Lemnos in the gloom of the mists. You,
when he had taken your life with the thin edge of the bronze sword,
he dragged again and again around his beloved companion's
tomb, Patroklos', whom you killed, but even so did not
bring him back to life. Now you lie in the palace, handsome
and fresh with dew, in the likeness of one whom he of the silver
bow, Apollo, has attacked and killed with his gentle arrows.'

So she spoke, in tears, and wakened the endless mourning.
Third and last Helen led the song of sorrow among them:
'Hektor, of all my lord's brothers dearest by far to my spirit:
my husband is Alexandros, like an immortal, who brought me
here to Troy; and I should have died before I came with him;
and here now is the twentieth year upon me since I came
from the place where I was, forsaking the land of my fathers. In this time
I have never heard a harsh saying from you, nor an insult.
No, but when another, one of my lord's brothers or sisters, a fair-robed
wife of some brother, would say a harsh word to me in the palace,
or my lord's mother – but his father was gentle always, a father
indeed – then you would speak and put them off and restrain them
by your own gentleness of heart and your gentle words. Therefore
I mourn for you in sorrow of heart and mourn myself also
and my ill luck. There was no other in all the wide Troad
who was kind to me, and my friend; all others shrank when they saw me.'

So she spoke in tears, and the vast populace grieved with her.
Now Priam the aged king spoke forth his word to his people:
'Now, men of Troy, bring timber into the city, and let not
your hearts fear a close ambush of the Argives. Achilleus
promised me, as he sent me on my way from the black ships,
that none should do us injury until the twelfth dawn comes.'

He spoke, and they harnessed to the wagons their mules and their oxen
and presently were gathered in front of the city. Nine days
they spent bringing in an endless supply of timber. But when
the tenth dawn had shone forth with her light upon mortals,
they carried out bold Hektor, weeping, and set the body
aloft a towering pyre for burning. And set fire to it.
But when the young dawn showed again with her rosy fingers,
the people gathered around the pyre of illustrious Hektor.
But when all were gathered to one place and assembled together,
first with gleaming wine they put out the pyre that was burning,
all where the fury of the fire still was in force, and thereafter
the brothers and companions of Hektor gathered the white bones
up, mourning, as the tears swelled and ran down their cheeks. Then
they laid what they had gathered up in a golden casket
and wrapped this about with soft robes of purple, and presently
put it away in the hollow of the grave, and over it
piled huge stones laid close together. Lightly and quickly
they piled up the grave-barrow, and on all sides were set watchmen
for fear the strong-greaved Achaians might too soon set upon them.
They piled up the grave-barrow and went away, and thereafter
assembled in a fair gathering and held a glorious
feast within the house of Priam, king under God's hand.
Such was their burial of Hektor, breaker of horses.

Reading 1.6 Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 1–284

(Source: Wender, D.S. (trans.) (1973) 'Hesiod, *Works and Days*', in *Hesiod and Theognis*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, pp.59–67)

PIERIAN Muses, bringers of fame: come
Tell of your father, Zeus, and sing his hymn,
Through whom each man is famous or unknown,
Talked-of or left obscure, through his great will.
With ease he strengthens any man; with ease
He makes the strong man humble and with ease
He levels mountains and exalts the plain,
Withers the proud and makes the crooked straight
With ease, the Thunderer whose home is high.
Hear, Zeus, and set our fallen laws upright
And may my song to Perses tell the truth.

Strife is no only child. Upon the earth
Two Strifes exist; the one is praised by those
Who come to know her, and the other blamed.
Their natures differ: for the cruel one
Makes battles thrive, and war; she wins no love
But men are forced, by the immortals' will,
To pay the grievous goddess due respect.
The other, first-born child of blackest Night,
Was set by Zeus, who lives in air, on high,
Set in the roots of earth, an aid to men.
She urges even lazy men to work:
A man grows eager, seeing another rich

From ploughing, planting, ordering his house;
So neighbour vies with neighbour in the rush
For wealth: this Strife is good for mortal men –
Potter hates potter, carpenters compete,
And beggar strives with beggar, bard with bard.

O Perses, store this in your heart; do not
Let Wicked Strife persuade you, skipping work,
To gape at politicians and give ear
To all the quarrels of the market place.
He has no time for courts and public life
Who has not stored up one full year's supply
Of corn, Demeter's gift, got from the earth.
When you have grain piled high, you may dispute
And fight about the goods of other men.
But *you* will never get this chance again:
Come, let us settle our dispute at once,
And let our judge be Zeus, whose laws are just.
We split our property in half, but you
Grabbed at the larger part and praised to heaven
The lords who love to try a case like that,
Eaters of bribes. The fools! They do not know
That half may be worth more by far than whole,
Nor how much profit lies in poor man's bread.

The gods desire to keep the stuff of life
Hidden from us. If they did not, you could
Work for a day and earn a year's supplies;
You'd pack away your rudder, and retire
The oxen and the labouring mules. But Zeus
Concealed the secret, angry in his heart
At being hoodwinked by Prometheus,
And so he thought of painful cares for men.
First he hid fire. But the son of Iapetos
Stole it from Zeus the Wise, concealed the flame
In a fennel stalk, and fooled the Thunderer.

Then, raging, spoke the Gatherer of Clouds:
'Prometheus, most crafty god of all,
You stole the fire and tricked me, happily,
You, plague on all mankind and on yourself.
They'll pay for fire: I'll give another gift
To men, an evil thing for their delight,
And all will love this ruin in their hearts.'
So spoke the father of men and gods, and laughed.

He told Hephaistos quickly to mix earth
And water, and to put in it a voice
And human power to move, to make a face
Like an immortal goddess, and to shape
The lovely figure of a virgin girl.
Athene was to teach the girl to weave,
And golden Aphrodite to pour charm

Upon her head, and painful, strong desire,
And body-shattering cares. Zeus ordered, then,
The killer of Argos, Hermes, to put in
Sly manners, and the morals of a bitch.
The son of Kronos spoke, and was obeyed.
The Lame God moulded earth as Zeus decreed
Into the image of a modest girl,
Grey-eyed Athene made her robes and belt,
Divine Seduction and the Graces gave
Her golden necklaces, and for her head
The Seasons wove spring flowers into a crown.
Hermes the Messenger put in her breast
Lies and persuasive words and cunning ways;
The herald of the gods then named the girl
Pandora, for the gifts which all the gods
Had given her, this ruin of mankind.

The deep and total trap was now complete;
The Father sent the gods' fast messenger
To bring the gift to Epimetheus
And Epimetheus forgot the words
His brother said, to take no gift from Zeus,
But send it back, lest it should injure men.
He took the gift, and understood, too late.

Before this time men lived upon the earth
Apart from sorrow and from painful work,
Free from disease, which brings the Death-gods in.
But now the woman opened up the cask,
And scattered pains and evils among men.
Inside the cask's hard walls remained one thing,
Hope, only, which did not fly through the door.
The lid stopped her, but all the others flew,
Thousands of troubles, wandering the earth.
The earth is full of evils, and the sea.
Diseases come to visit men by day
And, uninvited, come again at night
Bringing their pains in silence, for they were
Deprived of speech by Zeus the Wise. And so
There is no way to flee the mind of Zeus.

And now with art and skill I'll summarize
Another tale, which you should take to heart,
Of how both gods and men began the same.
The gods, who live on Mount Olympus, first
Fashioned a golden race of mortal men;
These lived in the reign of Kronos, king of heaven,
And like the gods they lived with happy hearts
Untouched by work or sorrow. Vile old age
Never appeared, but always lively-limbed,
Far from all ills, they feasted happily.
Death came to them as sleep, and all good things
Were theirs; ungrudgingly, the fertile land
Gave up her fruits unasked. Happy to be

At peace, they lived with every want supplied,
[Rich in their flocks, dear to the blessed gods.]

And then this race was hidden in the ground.
But still they live as spirits of the earth,
Holy and good, guardians who keep off harm,
Givers of wealth: this kingly right is theirs.
The gods, who live on Mount Olympus, next
Fashioned a lesser, silver race of men:
Unlike the gold in stature or in mind.

A child was raised at home a hundred years
And played, huge baby, by his mother's side.
When they were grown and reached their prime, they lived
Brief, anguished lives, from foolishness, for they
Could not control themselves, but recklessly
Injured each other and forsook the gods;
They did not sacrifice, as all tribes must, but left
The holy altars bare. And, angry, Zeus
The son of Kronos, hid this race away,
For they dishonoured the Olympian gods.

The earth then hid this second race, and they
Are called the spirits of the underworld,
Inferior to the gold, but honoured, too.
And Zeus the father made a race of bronze,
Sprung from the ash tree, worse than the silver race,
But strange and full of power. And they loved
The groans and violence of war; they ate
No bread; their hearts were flinty-hard; they were
Terrible men; their strength was great, their arms
And shoulders and their limbs invincible.
Their weapons were of bronze, their houses bronze;
Their tools were bronze: black iron was not known.
They died by their own hands, and nameless, went
To Hades' chilly house. Although they were
Great soldiers, they were captured by black Death,
And left the shining brightness of the sun.

But when this race was covered by the earth,
The son of Kronos made another, fourth,
Upon the fruitful land, more just and good,
A godlike race of heroes, who are called
The demi-gods – the race before our own.
Foul wars and dreadful battles ruined some;
Some sought the flocks of Oedipus, and died
In Cadmus' land, at seven-gated Thebes;
And some, who crossed the open sea in ships,
For fair-haired Helen's sake, were killed at Troy.
These men were covered up in death, but Zeus
The son of Kronos gave the others life

And homes apart from mortals, at Earth's edge.
And there they live a carefree life, beside
The whirling Ocean, on the Blessed Isles.
Three times a year the blooming, fertile earth
Bears honeyed fruits for them, the happy ones.
[And Kronos is their king, far from the gods,
For Zeus released him from his bonds, and these,
The race of heroes, well deserve their fame.

Far-seeing Zeus then made another race,
The fifth, who live now on the fertile earth.]
I wish I were not of this race, that I
Had died before, or had not yet been born.
This is the race of iron. Now, by day,
Men work and grieve unceasingly; by night,
They waste away and die. The gods will give
Harsh burdens, but will mingle in some good;
Zeus will destroy this race of mortal men,
When babies shall be born with greying hair.
Father will have no common bond with son,
Neither will guest with host, nor friend with friend;
The brother-love of past days will be gone.
Men will dishonour parents, who grow old
Too quickly, and will blame and criticize
With cruel words. Wretched and godless, they
Refusing to repay their bringing up,
Will cheat their aged parents of their due.
Men will destroy the towns of other men.
The just, the good, the man who keeps his word
Will be despised, but men will praise the bad
And insolent. Might will be Right, and shame
Will cease to be. Men will do injury
To better men by speaking crooked words
And adding lying oaths; and everywhere
Harsh-voiced and sullen-faced and loving harm,
Envy will walk along with wretched men.
Last, to Olympus from the broad-pathed Earth,
Hiding their loveliness in robes of white,
To join the gods, abandoning mankind,
Will go the spirits Righteousness and Shame.
And only grievous troubles will be left
For men, and no defence against our wrongs.

And now, for lords who understand, I'll tell
A fable: once a hawk, high in the clouds,
Clutched in his claws a speckled nightingale.
She, pierced by those hooked claws, cried, 'Pity me!'
But he made scornful answer: 'Silly thing.
Why do you cry? Your master holds you fast,
You'll go where I decide, although you have
A minstrel's lovely voice, and if I choose,
I'll have you for a meal, or let you go.

Only a fool will match himself against
A stronger party, for he'll only lose,
And be disgraced as well as beaten.' Thus
Spoke the swift-flying hawk, the long-winged bird.

O Perses, follow right; control your pride.
For pride is evil in a common man.
Even a noble finds it hard to bear;
It weighs him down and leads him to disgrace
The road to justice is the better way,
For Justice in the end will win the race
And Pride will lose: the simpleton must learn
This fact through suffering. The god of Oaths
Runs faster than a crooked verdict; when
Justice is dragged out of the way by men
Who judge dishonestly and swallow bribes,
A struggling sound is heard; then she returns
Back to the city and the homes of men,
Wrapped in a mist and weeping, and she brings
Harm to the crooked men who drove her out.
But when the judges of a town are fair
To foreigner and citizen alike,
Their city prospers and her people bloom;
Since Peace is in the land, her children thrive;
Zeus never marks them out for cruel war.
Famine and blight do not beset the just,
Who till their well-worked fields and feast. The earth
Supports them lavishly; and on the hills
The oak bears acorns for them at the top
And honey-bees below; their woolly sheep
Bear heavy fleeces, and their wives bear sons
Just like their fathers. Since they always thrive,
They have no need to go on ships, because
The plenty-bringing land gives them her fruit.

But there are some who till the fields of pride
And work at evil deeds; Zeus marks them out,
And often, all the city suffers for
Their wicked schemes, and on these men, from heaven
The son of Kronos sends great punishments,
Both plague and famine, and the people die.
Their wives are barren, and their villages
Dwindle, according to the plan of Zeus.
At other times the son of Kronos will
Destroy their army, or will snatch away
Their city wall, or all their ships at sea.
You lords, take notice of this punishment.
The deathless gods are never far away;
They mark the crooked judges who grind down
Their fellow-men and do not fear the gods.
Three times ten thousand watchers-over-men,
Immortal, roam the fertile earth for Zeus.

Clothed in a mist, they visit every land
And keep a watch on law-suits and on crimes.
One of them is the virgin, born of Zeus,
Justice, revered by all the Olympian gods.

Whenever she is hurt by perjurers,
Straightway she sits beside her father Zeus,
And tells him of the unjust hearts of men,
Until the city suffers for its lords
Who recklessly, with mischief in their minds,
Pervert their judgements crookedly. Beware,
You lords who swallow bribes, and try to judge
Uprightly, clear your minds of crookedness.
He hurts himself who hurts another man,
And evil planning harms the planner most.

Block 2

Reading 2.1 Aeschylus, *Persians*

(Source: Hall, E. (trans.) (1996) Aeschylus: *Persians*, Oxford: Oxbow Books, pp.39–103)

Note: the line numbers in the text may not always count up or down exactly from each five, as they were taken from the original Greek version, where the Greek words sometimes take up more or fewer lines than in the English version. Don't worry: it should still be easy for you to find your way around the text.

Characters in the drama:

Chorus of Old Men
The Queen
Messenger
Ghost of Dareios
Xerxes

[The scene is somewhere in the Persian city of Sousa. The audience can see an ancient building containing seats, and the tomb of Dareios. The dramatic time is the late autumn of 480 BC. Enter the chorus of elderly Persian counsellors.]

CHORUS We are called 'The Faithful' of the Persians
who have gone to the land of Greece,
and we are guardians
of the sumptuous palace, rich in gold.
Lord Xerxes the King himself,
son of Dareios,
chose us by virtue of our seniority to oversee his domain.
But already the heart within me
is troubled excessively, prophetic of disaster,
anxious about the homecoming of the King
and his gold-bedecked army;
for all of the might born of Asia
has departed, and clamours at the young man,
and no messenger either on foot or on horseback
has come to the Persians' city.
Forsaking Sousa and Agbatana
and the ancient ramparts of Kissia
they went, some on horseback,
some in ships, and some on foot, moving steadily
in the close columns of war.
Men sprang forth like Amistres and Artaphrenes,
Megabates and Astaspes,
commanders of the Persians,
kings subject to the great King,
guardians of the enormous army,
invincible archers and horsemen,
terrifying to look upon and formidable in battle,
in the steadfast resolve of their spirit.
And Artembares the charioteer,
and Masistres, and the noble Imaios,
invincible with the bow, and Pharandakes,
and Sosthanes, driving his horses.
The great and fertile

Nile sent forth others: Sousiskanes,
Egyptian-born Pegastagon,
and the ruler of sacred Memphis,
great Arsames, and Ariomardos,
governor of ancient Thebes,
and skilled oarsmen from the marshes,
an incalculable horde.
A crowd of Lydians followed, who live
in luxury and control the entire
continental-born race; they are set going by Mitragathes
and noble Arkteus, kingly rulers,
and by the manifold gold of Sardis; they are mounted
on numerous chariots,
columns of them, some with two poles and some with three,
a terrifying sight to behold.
The inhabitants of sacred Tmolos are set on
casting the yoke of slavery onto Greece;
Mardon, Tharybis, anvils of the lance,
along with the Mysians of the light spear. And Babylon,
rich in gold, sends forth her long trailing column
of hordes of every kind; sailors borne in ships,
and those who trust in their skill and courage with the bow.
From all of Asia there follow tribes
wielding the sabre,
at the dread summons of the King.
Such is the flower of manhood, such the flower of the
Persian land which has gone.
The entire land of Asia
which nurtured them grieves with soft yearning,
and parents and wives, counting the days,
shudder as time lengthens.
The King's army, which annihilates cities,
has already passed over to our neighbours' land opposite,
crossing the strait named after Helle,
Athamas' daughter, on a floating bridge bound with flaxen ropes,
yoking the neck of the sea with a roadway bolted together.

The raging leader of populous Asia
drives his godlike flock against every land
in two movements: an equal of the gods, born of the golden race,
he trusts in his stalwart
and stubborn commanders both on land and on the sea.

He casts from his eyes the dark
glance of a lethal snake;
with numerous soldiers and numerous sailors
he speeds on in his Syrian chariot,
leading an Ares armed with the bow against famous spearsmen.

No-one is so renowned for valour
that they can withstand such a huge flood of men,
and ward them off with sturdy defences.
A sea-wave is invincible.
The Persians' army is irresistible and its people are brave of heart.
But what mortal man can avoid

being cunningly deceived by god?
Who is so swift-footed that he has the power to leap easily aside?
With apparent friendliness at first Calamity fawns on a man
and induces him into her nets.
It is impossible for a mortal to escape from them and flee.
For Fate, ordained by the gods, long ago
gained the upper hand, and commanded the Persians
to engage in wars which destroy walls,
in the tumult of cavalry charges and in the overthrowing of cities.

But they learned to cast their sights
on the precinct of the ocean,
the wide-pathed sea whitening under the violent wind,
confident in the slender cables designed to provide a
passage for their men.

This is why the black robes of my heart are rent with terror –
'*oa*! – the Persian army!' – lest the city, the great citadel
of Sousa, become emptied of men and hear this cry.

And the Kissian city will sing in response,
'*oa*!' – this is what the massive horde of women will call out,
tearing their linen gowns.

For all the cavalry and all the infantry,
like a swarm of bees, have left with the leader of the army;
they have crossed to the other continent after yoking the sea
between the two headlands.

Marriage-beds are overflowing with the tears of yearning for husbands;
every softly-grieving Persian woman who has sent forth
her raging warrior husband is left alone under the marriage yoke,
aching with desire for her man.

But come, Persians, let us sit down
on this ancient building
and engage in deep and careful
thought; the need is urgent.
How are matters proceeding for Xerxes the King,
son of Dareios?
Has the drawn bow won,
or has the mighty pointed
spear been victorious?
But here comes the mother of the King,
my Queen, like light from the eyes
of gods. We prostrate ourselves,
and must all address her
with words of salutation.

[The chorus prostrate themselves and speak formally to the Queen as she enters in great pomp on a chariot from the direction of the palace.]

O highest Queen of the deep-girdled women of Persia,
aged mother of Xerxes and Dareios' wife, greetings.
You are the spouse of the Persians' god, and a god's mother,
unless an ancient deity has now somehow turned against the army.

QUEEN That is the reason why I have come here, leaving the palace
with its golden ornaments and the bed-chamber I shared
with Dareios. Anxiety is tearing my heart also: I did not

invent the proverb I am about to tell you, friends; I am afraid that 'great Wealth may kick up a cloud of dust from the ground and overturn the prosperity' which Dareios won by divine favour. The trouble in my heart, of which I can hardly speak, is twofold: I believe that the masses would not hold in respect wealth in the absence of men, and light would not shine as radiantly on indigent people as on the powerful. We have sufficient wealth, but I am afraid for the ' light' of our household. For I consider a household's 'light' to be the presence of its master. Faithful elders, since these are the circumstances, counsel me on this matter. For you are the source of all the wise advice I receive.

CHORUS Be sure of this, Queen of the realm: you do not have to repeat requests for us to help you by any word or action which lies within our power. For it is with goodwill towards you that we advise you, at your invitation.

QUEEN I have been incessantly visited at night by numerous dreams, ever since my son raised his army and departed intending to destroy the land of the Ionians. But last night's dream was the most vivid I have yet beheld. I will tell you about it. Two beautifully dressed women seemed to appear to me, one decked out in Persian robes, the other in Doric clothing. In stature they were conspicuously larger than people are today, and they were faultlessly lovely; they were sisters of one race. One of them lived in her fatherland, Greece, which she had obtained by lot, the other in the land of the barbarians. A conflict between these two arose, as it seemed to me. When my son found out about it he tried to restrain and mollify them; he harnessed them both beneath his chariot and put a yoke-strap beneath their necks. One of them towered proudly in this gear, taking the reins submissively in her mouth, but the other struggled, tore the harness from the chariot with her hands, dragged it violently along without the bridle, and smashed the yoke in the middle. My son fell out. His father Dareios stood close by, pitying him. When Xerxes saw him he tore the robes around his body.

These were the apparitions I saw during the night. But when I had risen and dipped my hands in the fair-flowing water of a spring, I stood at the altar with materials for a sacrifice in my hand. I wanted to make libation to the gods who avert disaster, to whom such rites are due. But I saw an eagle seeking refuge at the hearth of Phoebus: my friends, I stood there speechless with terror. Next I saw a hawk rushing on beating wings towards the eagle, and tearing its head with its talons. The eagle could do nothing but submit its body, cowering. These things are terrifying to me as witness, and to you as audience. For you are well aware that if my son were to succeed he would be a man to excite great admiration, but that if he fails – he is not accountable to the community. Provided that he has survived he is still sovereign of this land.

CHORUS We do not want, mother, to say anything either to frighten you too much or to make you over-confident. If you saw something boding evil, supplicate the gods with prayers, and ask them to avert the disaster and to grant blessings on yourself and your children and all your friends. Secondly, you must pour out libations to Earth and the dead. Ask in propitiatory manner that your husband Dareios, whom you say you saw during the night, send good fortune for you and your son up into the daylight from beneath the earth, and that contrary fortune be kept down by the earth in obscure darkness. This is the kindly advice I give you from my prophetic heart. In our judgement these matters will work out well for you in every way.

QUEEN As the first interpreters of these dreams you have pronounced them favourable to my son and my household. May everything work out for the best. We will do everything for the gods and our friends beneath the earth, as you instruct, when we return to the palace. But there is something I want to find out, my friends. In what part of the world do they say that Athens is situated?

CHORUS Far away towards the west, where the Lord Sun sets.

QUEEN Was this the city my son was so eager to make his prey?

CHORUS Yes, for thus all Hellas would become subject to the King.

QUEEN Do they have such a large supply of men for their army?

CHORUS Their army is large enough; it did the Medes great harm.

QUEEN Besides their men what else do they have? Is there plenty of wealth in their palace?

CHORUS They have a spring of silver, a treasury in the earth.

QUEEN Do they wield bows and arrows in their hands?

CHORUS Not at all. They have spears for close combat and are equipped with shields.

QUEEN Who leads them and is sole commander of the army?

CHORUS They are called neither the slaves nor subjects of any single man.

QUEEN So how then can they withstand hostile invaders?

CHORUS Well enough to have destroyed Dareios' large and excellent army.

QUEEN What you say is terrible for the parents of our men to contemplate.

[A man dressed in Persian clothes runs into the theatre from the opposite direction to the entrance of the Queen.]

CHORUS I think that you will soon be in possession of a full and truthful report; for this man is clearly Persian, to judge from the way he is running, and he is bringing news of some event, whether it will make good or bad listening.

MESSENGER O citadels of all Asia, O land of Persia, storehouse of huge wealth! Your great prosperity has been destroyed at a single blow; the flower of the Persians has fallen and gone. *Oimoi*, it is hard to be the first to report disastrous news. Yet I must

relate the catastrophic story in its entirety, Persians. For the whole barbarian force has perished.

CHORUS Agonising, agonising, without precedent
and dire! *Aiai*, Persians,
weep as you hear about this disaster.

MESS. Indeed, for the entire force is lost; I did not expect to return home alive myself.

CHORUS We are old; our lives have been proven too long
if we must live to hear
about this unexpected calamity.

MESS. I myself witnessed the damage suffered, Persians, and can give you an account of it. I did not hear about it from other people.

CHORUS *Ototoi*! In vain
did our weapons, innumerable and various,
go from Asia to Zeus'
country, the land of Greece.

MESS. The shores of Salamis and all the neighbouring regions are filled up with the corpses of those who met unhappy deaths.

CHORUS *Ototoi*! You are saying
that the dead bodies of our friends are tossed,
drenched,
and carried along by the sea,
their cloaks wandering around them.

MESS. Our bows and arrows were useless, and the entire force was defeated by the ramming of ships.

CHORUS Yell out a melancholy shout of ill omen
against our enemies;
the gods have ordained utter catastrophe for the Persians.
Aiai, the army is destroyed.

MESS. O Salamis, most hateful name to hear. Alas, how I groan as I remember Athens.

CHORUS Athens is indeed abhorrent to her enemies.
We have reason to remember
that she ruined the marriages of many Persian wives,
leaving them without husbands.

QUEEN I have long been silent in my misery, stunned at the terrible news; for this disaster is so overwhelming that it is hard to speak or ask questions about what we have suffered. Nevertheless it is necessary for mankind to endure the tribulations the gods send. Compose yourself and speak, unfolding the whole disaster, even if you are groaning at our miseries. Who survived? Which of the leaders placed in high command must we mourn; who died and left their positions over their troops vacant and unmanned?

MESS. Xerxes himself lives and looks upon the light.

QUEEN What you have said brings a great radiance to my household, anyway, and a brilliant day out of dark night.

MESS. Artembares, the commander of ten thousand horsemen, is being smashed along the rough shores of Sileniai. And Dadakes the chiliarch, at a blow of a spear, leapt lightly from his ship. High-born Tenagon of the Bactrians' most ancient lineage haunts the wave-beaten island of Ajax. Lilaios and Arsames, and thirdly Argestes, rammed in defeat the tough ground of the dove-breeding island. Pharnouchos died, neighbour of the springs of Egyptian Nile; and those who fell from a single ship, Arkteus, Adeues and thirdly Pheresseues. Matallos from Chrysa died, the commander of ten thousand, and his thick, bushy, tawny beard changed colour as he dipped it into the dye of the purple sea. And Magos the Arabian and Artabes the Bactrian, leader of thirty thousand dark horseman; he moved to a cruel land, there to be killed. Amistris and Amphistreus, who wielded a spear laden with pain, and excellent Ariomardos, thus bringing grief to Sardis, and Seisames the Mysian, and Tharybis the commander of five times fifty ships, a handsome man of Lyrnaean family; the poor man lies there dead, after meeting an unfortunate end. And Syennesis, the most courageous, the leader of the Cilicians, the man who individually caused most trouble to the enemy, died a glorious death. This is the extent of the leaders I have called to mind; but my report encompasses but a small part of the terrible situation.

QUEEN *Aiai*! What I am hearing is the height of calamity, a cause of disgrace to the Persians and of shrill screams. But go back to your report and tell me this: how great was the fleet of Hellenic ships that they thought they could meet the Persians in a naval encounter, with ramming of ships?

MESS. As far as the size of the fleet was concerned you can be sure that the barbarians would have won. The total number of Greek ships came to three hundred, but ten of these were selected out separately from them. The size of Xerxes' fleet I know for certain was a thousand, and two hundred and seven of the ships were exceptionally fast. So much for the numbers. You are not under the impression that we were numerically outdone in the battle? No, it was some god who destroyed us by loading the scales with an unequal weight of fate. The gods protect the city of the goddess Pallas.

QUEEN So is the city of Athens still not sacked?

MESS. While men remain to a city its defences are secure.

QUEEN Then tell me how the naval encounter began. Who commenced hostilities? Was it the Greeks? Or my son, with pride in his superior number of ships?

MESS. The whole disaster began, mistress, when some vengeful spirit or malignant deity appeared from somewhere. For a Greek man came from the Athenian force and told your son Xerxes this: when the darkness of black night fell, the Greeks would not stay there, but would leap up onto the benches and try to save their lives by making a furtive escape, each one of them going in a different direction.

Because Xerxes did not understand that this Greek was tricking him, nor that the gods were against him, on hearing this he immediately gave a pre-battle speech to his admirals as follows. As soon the sun should cease burning the earth with its rays and darkness should take over the regions of the sky, they were to arrange the column of ships in three rows to guard the passageways leading out to the sounding sea, and other ships were to surround and encircle Ajax's island. If the Greeks avoided a horrid fate, and found some way of escaping secretly with their ships, the prescribed punishment for all his men would be beheading. This is what he said, and with a very optimistic heart, for he did not comprehend what the gods had in store.

And yet the Greeks prepared their dinner, in no disorderly manner but with hearts obedient to authority, and each sailor fastened his oar-handle to the peg, ready for rowing. When the sunlight failed and night came on, each sailor embarked, the king of his own oar, as did each man who was master of his weapons. The banks of rowers called out in encouragement to each other down the length of the ships, and they made sail, each according to his instructions. And all night long the ships' captains kept the entire naval force moving to and fro.

Night was departing, and the Greek force had not attempted any furtive escape whatever. As soon as the brilliant sight of daybreak and her white horses covered the earth, first a sung cry of good omen rang out loudly from the Greek side, and simultaneously a high-pitched echo sounded back in response from the island rocks. Terror fell on all the barbarians, mistaken in their expectation. For it was not in flight that the Greeks were then singing the sacred paean, but rushing into battle with courage and confidence. A trumpet fired their whole fleet on with its sound. Immediately, on the command, they all pulled together simultaneously, striking the deep salty sea, dashing it with their oars. At great speed the whole fleet came clearly into view. First, in the lead, came the right wing, in disciplined and orderly fashion, and secondly the whole fleet came out against us; at the same time we could hear a great shout: "O sons of the Greeks, come on, liberate your fatherland, liberate your children, your wives, the shrines of your ancestral gods and the graves of your forefathers. Our struggle now is on behalf of them all!" This was met from our side by a clamour in the Persian tongue; it was no longer time for delaying.

Straightaway a ship struck its bronze beak against a ship. A Greek vessel began the ramming, and smashed off the entire stern of a Phoenician ship; each captain steered his ship against another. At first the flood of the Persian force put up a resistance; but when the mass of their ships was crowded together in a narrow strait, and they could not bring any assistance to one another, they struck each other with

their bronze-mouthed beaks, and shattered all the rowing equipment; the Greek ships judiciously encircled them and made their strike, and ships' hulls were turned upside down, and it was no longer possible to glimpse the sea, which was brimming with wrecked ships and dead men. The shores and reefs were brimming with corpses. Every ship was being rowed in disorderly flight – every ship, that is, in the barbarian fleet. But they kept on striking and splicing us with broken oars and fragments of the wreckage as if we were tunny or a catch of fish. At the same time groaning and shrieking filled the sea, until black-eyed night brought it to an end. I could not give you a full narrative about the plethora of disasters even if I took ten days to go through it line by line. For you can be certain that never in a single day has such a large number of men died.

QUEEN *Aiai*! A vast ocean of catastrophes has burst out upon the Persians and the entire barbarian people.

MESS. You can be sure that they are not yet half narrated. Such was the suffering which happened after them that it outweighed them in the balance by at least twice.

QUEEN And what misfortune could be even more hateful than this? Tell me, what other disaster happened to our force to swing the balance even further down?

MESS. The Persians who were in their physical prime, most noble in spirit and distinguished in lineage, the ones always foremost in fidelity to the King himself – they died shamefully by the most inglorious of fates.

QUEEN *Oi*, how wretched I am at this terrible misfortune, friends. How do you say these men died?

MESS. There is an island in front of Salamis, small and difficult for ships to anchor in, where dance-loving Pan treads the seashores. Xerxes had sent these men there so that they could both make an easy killing of the enemy Greek force when they were shipwrecked and tried to make to the island for safety, and save their own comrades from the sea straits. So poorly did he understand what was to happen. For on the same day that god gave victory in the naval battle to the Greeks, they armoured their bodies with fine bronze weaponry, leapt out of their ships and encircled the whole island, so that our men had no idea where to turn. They were struck repeatedly by stones thrown from Greek hands, and arrows shot from the bow-string fell on them and destroyed them. In the end the Greeks, rushing at a single cry against them, struck them, butchered the poor men's limbs until they had all been deprived of life.

Xerxes wailed aloud as he saw the depth of the disaster. For he had a seat with a clear view of the whole militia, a high bank close to the sea. He tore his robes and shrilly screamed, and straightaway gave an order to his infantry, rushing away in disorderly flight. You have to lament this disaster in addition to the former one.

QUEEN O loathsome deity, how you have deceived the minds of the Persians! The vengeance my son planned to exact from famous Athens turned bitter on him, and the barbarians whom Marathon destroyed were not enough for him. My son, expecting to gain requital for them, has brought on a multitude of afflictions. But you, tell me, which of the ships evaded destruction? Where did you leave them? Do you have knowledge so that you can give me a clear indication?

MESS. The commanders of the remaining ships hurriedly took to flight in disorder with a following wind. The rest of the force began dying off in the Boeotian land, some afflicted with thirst for shining spring-water, others [... and others of us,] gasping for breath, made our way through to the country of the Phocians and the land of Doris and the Melian gulf, where Spercheios irrigates the plain with his benevolent waters. From there, starving, we arrived at the plain of the Achaean land and the cities of Thessaly; the majority died there from thirst and hunger, for both were rife. We came to Magnesia and the land of Macedonia, to the ford of Axios and Bolbe's reedy marsh and Mount Pangaion, Edonian territory. That night god induced wintry weather out of season, and the entire sacred flowing Strymon froze. Those who previously had not taken the gods at all seriously then called on them with prayers, prostrating themselves before Earth and Sky. When the army finished its numerous invocations of the gods it began making its way over the packed ice. And those of us who crossed quickly, before the sun-god's beams spread around, have survived. For the bright orb of the sun, blazing with its rays, heated the path with flame and drove through the middle of it. The men fell on one another, and lucky were they whose breath of life broke from them the fastest. The remnant who happened to survive – there are not many – are coming in flight to the hearths of their homeland, after just managing to pass through Thrace with much suffering. Such is the cause of grief for the city of the Persians, yearning for the country's beloved young men. These things are true. But my words omit many of the afflictions with which god blasted the Persians.

[Exit the messenger]

CHORUS O grievous deity, you have leapt and stamped on the entire Persian race too heavily!

QUEEN *Oi*, what misery the destruction of the army brings me! O nocturnal vision, appearing to me in dreams, how very clearly you revealed to me our tribulations! But you, friends, judged them to be of too little account. However, since your words ordained it, I want nevertheless first to make prayers to the gods. Then I shall come, after fetching gifts for Earth and the dead, a libation from my palace. I know that doing this cannot change what has happened, but it is for the future, in case things may improve. You should contribute trustworthy counsels about what has happened to us who

trust you. And if my son arrives here before me, console
him, and escort him to the palace, so that he does not pile
any further afflictions on afflictions.

[Exit the Queen in the direction of the palace.]

CHORUS O Zeus my king, now you have destroyed
the army of the Persians
who could boast so many men,
and you have shrouded the citadel of Sousa and Agbatana
over with grief and gloom.
There are many women tearing their veils
with their soft hands,
soaking, drenching their breasts
with tears, taking their share of pain.
The softly wailing women of Persia
who long to see their recent bridegrooms,
the soft sheets of their nuptial beds,
the pleasures of luxuriant youth, abandon themselves
to grieving in insatiable laments.
And I myself genuinely sustain deep grief
for the fate of the departed.

For now the entire land of Asia mourns
emptied out of its men.
Xerxes led them away,
Xerxes destroyed them,
Xerxes wrong-headedly drove everything on in seafaring ships.
Why was Dareios, lord of the bow,
beloved leader of Sousa,
so benign in the past to his citizens?

Soldiers and sailors!
Dark-eyed and sail-winged
ships led them away,
ships destroyed them,
ships manned by Ionians destroyed them
by lethal ramming.
We hear that the King himself only just escaped
to the bleak plains
and pathways of Thrace.

The first to meet their fate,
overtaken by necessity,
are shipwrecked against the shores of Cychreia,
Groan and mourn; with a deep voice bewail aloud
your heaven-sent distress,
and stretch out your miserable voice
in an agonising howl.

Lacerated terribly by the brine,
they are mangled by the voiceless children,
of the undefiled sea,
And each house deprived of a man grieves, and parents left childless
bewail in their old age,
their heaven-sent distress,
as they learn the full measure of their affliction.

Not for long now will the inhabitants of Asia
abide under Persian rule,
nor pay further tribute
under compulsion to the King,
nor shall they be his subjects,
prostrating themselves on the ground; for the kingly power is destroyed.

Men will no longer curb their tongues;
for people are released to talk freely
when a strong yoke
has been removed.
And the soil of Ajax's sea-washed island,
stained with gore, holds the remains of the Persians.

[Enter the Queen, on foot, from the direction of the palace.]

QUEEN Friends, whoever has experience of adversity knows that when a wave of disasters rears against people they tend to be utterly terrified. But when heaven blows gently, they believe that it will always grant the same wind of good fortune. I am already full of every kind of fear; hostile images from the gods appear before my eyes, and a din – no victory-song – rings in my ears. Such is the terror caused by the disaster which is driving me out of my mind. I have therefore made my way back from the palace without the chariot and finery I had before, carrying materials for a libation to propitiate my son's father, of the sort that appease the dead: delicious white milk from a pure heifer, glistening honey distilled from flowers, lustral water from a virgin spring, and pure liquid taken from its wild mother, this delightful product of an ancient vine. Here also are the fragrant fruit of a pale olive-tree, which flourishes in leaf perpetually, and garlands of flowers, the children of fruitful Earth. But you, friends, sing hymns to accompany these libations to the dead, and summon up the spirit of Dareios. I will send forth for the earth to drink these gifts in honour of the gods below.

CHORUS My lady Queen, revered by the Persians,
you send the libations to the subterranean chambers,
and we with hymns will ask
the escorts of the dead
to be benevolent beneath the earth.
You, pure gods of the underworld,
Earth and Hermes and king of those below,
send up the soul from below into the light.
For if he knows any further cure for our problems,
he alone of men could tell how to bring it to pass.
Does my blessed King, equal to a god, hear me
as I let forth in my barbarian language clear,
varied, ceaseless and harsh-sounding utterances?
Will my cries of misery and pain
get through?
Is he listening to me from below?

But you, Earth, and the other leaders of those below,
permit the proud spirit
to come from your halls, the Sousa-born god of the Persians.
Send him up;
the soil of Persia
has never covered his like before.

Beloved was the man, beloved his funeral mound,
beloved the disposition of the person it has covered.
Aïdoneus, be his escort, Aïdoneus, send up
the divine ruler Darian!

For he never killed our men
through the ruinous waste of war.
He was called godlike in counsel for the Persians, and godlike in counsel
he was, since he steered the army well.

Shah, ancient Shah, come, draw near,
arrive at the very top of your funeral mound,
raising the yellow-dyed slippers on your feet,
and revealing the tip of your kingly tiara.
Come, benign father Darian!

Come that you may hear about the strange new suffering;
master of masters, appear!
Some Stygian mist is floating overhead,
for all our young men have recently perished.
Come, benign father Darian!

Aiai, aiai!
O you whose death was much lamented by your friends,
master, master, what is the reason
for this double error(?)
For the triple-banked ships of this entire land have been destroyed
and are ships no more, ships no more.

[The ghost of Dareios appears over his funeral mound]

DAREIOS O faithful of the faithful, contemporaries of my youth, aged Persians, what is the sorrow the city is suffering? The ground groans, has been beaten, is being gashed. The sight of my wife close to the tomb fills me with fear; I received the libations graciously. But you are performing a dirge, standing near the tomb, and pitifully summon me, raising your voices in necromantic wails. Leaving Hades is especially difficult, and the gods of the underworld are better at taking than releasing. Nevertheless, since I have authority amongst them, I have come. But hurry, so that I cannot be reproached about the time I have spent. What is this new and onerous evil crushing the Persians?

CHORUS Awesome to me is the sight of you,
awesome it is to me to speak face to face with you,
on account of my old fear of you.

DAREIOS Since I came here from below in obedience to your laments, do not make a long oration, but speak to me in concise words and get the whole matter over, casting aside the awe in which you hold me.

CHORUS I am afraid to oblige
I am afraid to answer,
in words hard for friends to utter.

DAREIOS Since you men are inhibited by the old fear in your minds, you, high-born lady, aged partner of my marriage bed, stop these tears and lamentations and tell me something clear. It is the human condition that calamities happen to men. For mortals face numerous hazards, coming both from the sea and the land, and the longer life is extended the more there are.

QUEEN O you who in your fortunate destiny outdid all men in prosperity, while you looked upon the sun's rays you were enviable, living your life happily among the Persians, like a god; and now I envy you, because you died before witnessing the depths of our disasters. You will hear, Dareios, the entire story in a brief statement: the Persians, 'the destroyers of cities', have been utterly destroyed.

DAREIOS How? Were they blasted by some plague, or was there civic strife?

QUEEN Not at all. But the entire armed forces were destroyed at Athens.

DAREIOS Which of my sons led a campaign there? Tell me.

QUEEN Raging Xerxes, after emptying the whole continent.

DAREIOS How did the poor wretch attempt this foolish enterprise – with the army or the navy?

QUEEN Both. The front was a double one, incorporating both forces.

DAREIOS How did such a great land army manage to get over there?

QUEEN He yoked the strait of Helle with contraptions to make a road over it.

DAREIOS He actually managed to close up the great Bosporos?

QUEEN Yes. But perhaps one of the gods facilitated his project.

DAREIOS Alas, it was a mighty god that came upon him, to make him lose his judgement.

QUEEN Indeed, for one can see the disastrous result of his achievement.

DAREIOS What happened to them to make you lament like this?

QUEEN The defeat of the navy determined the destruction of the land army.

DAREIOS Has the whole force then been completely wiped out by the spear?

QUEEN Yes: not only does all Sousa lament its emptiness of men ...

DAREIOS Alas for the trusty protection and assistance the army gave!

QUEEN ... but all the Bactrian people have disappeared to a man.

DAREIOS O miserable wretch, the allies he lost were in their youthful prime.

QUEEN They say that only Xerxes, with hardly any men ...

DAREIOS How and where did he end up? Is there any chance of his survival?

QUEEN ... gladly reached the bridge which yoked the two continents.

DAREIOS And so he reached this continent safely; is this true?

QUEEN Yes. This account of events is clearly correct; there is no disagreement.

DAREIOS Alas! How swiftly oracles have been accomplished! Zeus has hurled down on my son the consummation of prophecies. I trusted, I suppose, that the gods would bring them to fulfilment in some far distant time. But when someone is himself hasty, god lends assistance, too. Now it seems that a fountain-spring of misery has been discovered for all those dear to me. And this was achieved by my son, uncomprehending in his youthful audacity, the man who thought he could constrain with fetters, like a slave, the sacred flowing Hellespont, the divine stream of the Bosporos. He altered the very nature of the strait, and by casting around it hammered shackles furnished a great road for his great army; although only a mortal, he foolishly thought that he could overcome all the gods, including Poseidon. Surely this must have been some disease affecting my son's mind? I am afraid that the great wealth I amassed by my labours may be plundered by the first comer.

QUEEN Raging Xerxes learned the idea from talking with wicked men. They said that while you had acquired great wealth for your children by your valour, his lack of manly courage made him play the warrior at home, and he did not increase the prosperity left by his father at all. It was because he heard reproaches of this kind expressed frequently by wicked men that he decided to implement the road over the Hellespont and the campaign against Greece.

DAREIOS And so he has brought about something so momentous, so unforgettable, that it has never before befallen: the complete emptying out of the city of Sousa. This has never happened since lord Zeus bestowed this honour upon us, that a single man should have command over all of sheep-rearing Asia, and wield the sceptre of authority. For Medos was the first leader of the people, and his son was the next to accomplish this task, for good sense steered his heart. Third in line came Kyros, a most fortunate man, whose rule brought peace to all his friends, and who acquired the peoples of Lydia and Phrygia and controlled all Ionia by force. For god held no grudge against him, since he was of kindly disposition. Kyros' son was the fourth to direct the host, and the fifth ruler was Mardos, a disgrace to his fatherland and the ancient throne. He was killed in the palace by noble Artaphrenes, along with some friends whose obligation it was. Sixth came Maraphis, seventh Artaphrenes, and then myself. The lot I desired fell to me. And I went on many military campaigns with a large army, but I never brought such a great catastrophe upon the city. My son Xerxes is a young man who thinks young thoughts and does not remember my injunctions. For know this well, contemporaries of mine: none of us who have wielded the

royal power would ever have been responsible for so much suffering.

CHORUS What then, lord Dareios? What conclusion are your words pointing to? In the circumstances how can the Persian people do best?

DAREIOS Only if you take no expedition into Greek territory, not even if the Persian army is larger. For the very soil of Greece is their ally.

CHORUS What do you mean? How is it an ally?

DAREIOS It starves to death any excess population.

CHORUS But the force we will muster will be a fine one, carefully selected.

DAREIOS No. Even the forces now in Greek territory will fail to return home safely.

CHORUS What are you saying? Is the barbarian force not crossing the straits of Helle from Europe intact?

DAREIOS Few enough out of so many, if one who contemplates what has happened should have any trust in the gods' ordinances. They all without exception come to pass. This means that Xerxes, in leaving his selected troops behind, is deluded by empty hopes. They are waiting where the Asopos waters the plains with his streams, to fatten pleasingly the Boeotian land. The pinnacle of misery and suffering awaits them there, in requital for hubris and godless designs. When they went to the land of Greece they were not ashamed to steal images of gods, nor to set fire to temples; altars vanished from sight, and the shrines of the gods were uprooted from their foundations and turned upside down in total chaos. And so they suffer tribulations no less than those they have caused themselves, and they will suffer more, nor is there yet any solid base to their troubles: they are still welling up. So great will be the bloody sacrificial slaughter, caused by Doric spears, on the earth of Plataea. Piles of corpses will mutely signify to the eyes of people even three generations hence that mortals must not think thoughts above their station; for hubris flowered and produced a crop of calamity, and from it reaped a harvest of lamentation. Consider what the penalties for this are like, and remember Athens and Greece, so that no-one may scorn the situation god has put him in, lust after what belongs to others, and pour away great prosperity. For Zeus stands over and chastises arrogant minds, and he is a stern assessor. So in the light of this, use sensible words of warning to admonish Xerxes to behave temperately and stop offending the gods with his boasts and excessive confidence.

But you, aged and beloved mother of Xerxes, go home, get suitable clothing for your son, and meet him. For in his anguish at the catastrophe he has completely ripped up the embroidered robes he is wearing into tattered threads. So calm him down with kind words; you, I know, are the only one he will be able to bear listening to.

I am now going back down into the subterranean
darkness. Elders, farewell to you. Lend your souls to
pleasure a day at a time, despite the difficulties, since wealth
is of no use to the dead.

[Dareios disappears from view.]

CHORUS It was agonising to hear about the barbarians' many
tribulations, both now and in the future.

QUEEN O god, numerous harsh pains are afflicting me, but the
misfortune which hurts me most of all to hear about is that
my son is disgraced by his clothes on his body. I shall go
and get robes from the palace and try to meet him. For I
shall not fail those dear to me in a time of trial.

[Exit the Queen in the direction of the palace.]

CHORUS *O popoi*, what a great and excellent
life of civic order was ours, when the old
all-sufficing undamaging invincible
godlike King Dareios ruled the land!

First we proved ourselves glorious on military campaigns,
and then a system of laws, steadfast as towers, regulated everything(?)
Our men returned home again from wars
successfully, uninjured and unharmed.
How many cities he took without even crossing the river Halys,
without even leaving his hearth:
the Acheloian cities neighbouring the gulf of Strymon,
Thracian garrisons.

And the walled cities on dry land outside the lake
knew him as their King,
proudly situated around the broad stream of Helle,
the creeks of the Propontis,
and the mouth of the Black Sea.

And the sea-washed islands opposite the
coast of the peninsula, lying near this country,
such as Lesbos and olive-producing Samos,
Chios and Paros, Naxos, Mykonos,
and Andros the close neighbour of Tenos.

And he governed the sea-girt islands between the coasts,
Lemnos and Ikaria,
Rhodes and Cnidos, and the cities of Cyprus,
Paphos, Soloi and Salamis, whose
mother-state is the cause of the lamentations now.

And he governed in his wisdom the cities rich in
wealth and men in the Ionian land colonised by Greeks.
He had at hand the indefatigable strength of men
under arms and a great variety of allies.
But now there is no doubt that through wars we are enduring
the gods' reversal of our fortunes;
we have suffered a great defeat through blows inflicted at sea.

[Enter Xerxes, in rags and on a curtained vehicle, from the same direction as the messenger.]

XERXES *Iō*!
Wretched me, I have suffered a loathsome

and totally unexpected fate!
How cruelly god has come down on the Persian race!
Miserable me, what is to become of me?
The vigour has gone from my limbs
as I contemplate the advanced age of these citizens.
O Zeus, I wish that fate had shrouded me
with death as well,
along with the men who died.

CHORUS *Ototoi*, my King! Alas for your noble army
and for the great prestige of imperial Persia,
and for the glorious men
whom god has now cut down!
Earth laments the youth of the young
men she bore, killed by Xerxes, who has crammed
Hades with Persians. Many men
from Agbatana – the flower of the land,
archers, a great thicket of men,
tens of thousands of them – are destroyed.
Aiai aiai – their cherished might!
The land of Asia, O King of the country,
has terribly, terribly been brought to her knees.

XERXES Behold me – *oioi* –I am lamentable!
I have become a miserable blight
upon my family and my fatherland.

CHORUS To salute your return I shall let forth this
cry of ill omen, the ill-auguring sound
of a Mariandynian mourner,
a wail full of tears.

XERXES Let out your ceaseless, dismal,
harsh-voiced noise, for god has now
changed course against me.

CHORUS I shall indeed let out my dismal noise,
honouring the people's suffering, and the city of my birth,
which mourns the disasters incurred at sea.
I shall shriek a tearful lament.

XERXES Robbed by the Ionian
– the Ionian – Ares, with his fences of ships,
favouring the other side,
ravaging the night-dark surface of the sea
and the ill-starred shore.

CHORUS *Oioioi* – cry it out, and find everything out.
Where is the rest of your crowd of friends?
Where are your comrades,
such as Pharandakes,
Sousas, Pelagon and Datamas?
Psammis and Sousiskanes,
who left from Agbatana?

XERXES I left them behind, destroyed,
disappearing from Phoenician ships
onto the strands

of Salamis, striking
against the harsh coast.

CHORUS *Oioioi* – cry it out; where are your Pharnouchos
and noble Ariomardos?
Where lord Seualkes
or Lilaios of noble birth?
Memphis, Tharybis and Masistras,
Artembares and Hystaichmas?
I put the question to you again.

XERXES *Iō iō*, ah me!
When they saw Athens, ancient
and abhorrent, all at one oar-stroke –
ehe ehe – they lay gasping, poor wretches, on the shore.

CHORUS And what of the best of the Persians,
your most faithful, all-seeing Eye?
The one who counted the tens of thousands
[——], the fairest son
of Batanochos,
son of Sesames, son of Megabates?
And Parthos and great Oibares –
did you leave them behind, leave them behind? Ō *ō*, for their misery!
You tell of evils beyond evils for high-born Persians.

XERXES You stir up in me longing
for my noble comrades,
telling of unforgettable – unforgettable – and loathsome evils
beyond evils.
My heart cries out – cries out – from within my limbs.

CHORUS There are yet others we long for –
Xanthes, commander of ten thousand
Mardians, and Anchares the Arian,
and Diaixis and Arsakes,
lords of the cavalry,
[——] and Lythimnas
and Tolmos, insatiable in war.
I am astounded – astounded – that they do not follow
behind the wheels of your curtained car.

XERXES They have gone, those commanders of the army.

CHORUS They have gone – *oi* – into obscurity.

XERXES *Iē iē*, *iō iō*!

CHORUS *Iō iō*, O gods,
you caused an unexpected and outstanding
disaster! How terribly Calamity looks at us!

XERXES We have been struck down – *oi* – from our lifelong good fortune ...

CHORUS We have been struck down; for it is clear ...

XERXES ... by new anguish, by new anguish!

CHORUS ... that we encountered the Ionian sailors
to our misfortune.
The Persian race is unlucky in war.

XERXES How could it be otherwise? It is a miserable
blow for me to have lost so great an army.

CHORUS Is anything left of the Persians, O man of great calamity?

XERXES Do you see what remains of my outfit?

CHORUS I see, I see.

XERXES And this quiver ...

CHORUS What is this that you say has survived?

XERXES ... the storehouse of arrows?

CHORUS Little enough out of so much.

XERXES We have been deprived of those who defended us.

CHORUS The Ionian people do not run away from battle.

XERXES They are too warlike; I watched
an unexpected disaster.

CHORUS Do you mean the rout of our naval force?

XERXES I ripped my gown because of the disaster which happened.

CHORUS *Papai*, *papai*!

XERXES And even more than *papai*.

CHORUS Twofold, threefold are ...

XERXES ... our afflictions. But they delight our adversaries.

CHORUS Yes, and our strength was shorn off.

XERXES I am stripped bare of escorts.

CHORUS By the disasters incurred by our friends at sea.

XERXES Weep, weep at the disaster; proceed towards the palace.

CHORUS *Aiai*, *aiai*, agony, agony.

XERXES Cry out in response to me.

CHORUS A wretched response of wretched cries to wretched cries.

XERXES Shout your song along with me.

CHORUS *Ototototoi*!
This misfortune is hard to bear:
oi, this pains me exceedingly too.

XERXES Row with your arms like oars, row them, and groan for my sake.

CHORUS I weep in my distress.

XERXES Cry out in response to me.

CHORUS This is my concern, master.

XERXES Raise high your voice in wailing.

CHORUS *Ototototoi*!
Groans will mingle,
oi, with blackening blows.

XERXES Beat your breast and cry out the Mysian lament.

CHORUS Agonising, agonising!

XERXES And ravage for me the white hair of your beard.

CHORUS I do so with tightly clutching hands and terrible despair.

XERXES Scream sharply.

CHORUS This too I will do.

XERXES Tear the robe on your breast with your finger-nails.

CHORUS Agonising, agonising!

XERXES Pluck your hair and pity the army.

CHORUS I do so with tightly clutching hands and terrible despair.

XERXES Let tears fall from your eyes.

CHORUS My eyes are wet.

XERXES Cry out in response to me.

CHORUS *Oioi, oioi*!

XERXES Wail as you proceed towards the palace.

CHORUS *Iō, iō*; the Persian earth is hard to tread.

XERXES Cry *iō*a throughout the city.

CHORUS *Iō*a indeed; yes, yes.

XERXES Wail, you who tread softly.

CHORUS *Iō, iō*; the Persian earth is hard to tread.

XERXES *Ē-ē, ē-ē*, triple banked ...

CHORUS .... *ē-ē, ē-ē*, were the ships in which they died.

<XERXES Escort me home now.>

CHORUS I will indeed escort you with harsh-voiced wails.

[Xerxes and the chorus exeunt in the direction of the palace.]

Commentary

(Felix Budelmann)

1–7 The opening words reveal the identity of the chorus: they are elderly advisors at the Persian court. The opening also introduces Xerxes, son of Darius, as the present king. In the following lines, the audience will learn that the play is set in Persia, while Xerxes is away on campaign in Greece.

16 **Sousa** (or Susa), **Agbatana** and **Kissia** are all part of the Persian empire.

21–58 Most of the names of Persian commanders in these lines are not otherwise known. They may or may not be historical. The places mentioned in this section are all part of the Persian empire.

69 **strait named after Helle**: the Hellespont. Xerxes' crossing of the Hellespont on a bridge of boats is considered momentous in Persian and Greek sources, including this play. Elsewhere in the play, Aeschylus also refers to it as the Bosphorus. (Technically, the Hellespont is further west, in what are now called the Dardanelles, with the Bosphorus running north-east from present-day Istanbul to the Black Sea.)

76 **born of the golden race**: an allusion to the myth of Danae. Danae conceived Perseus when Zeus visited her in the shape of a shower of gold. Perseus, one of the major Greek mythological figures, is considered an ancestor of the Persians in some sources.

85 **Ares**: the Greek god of war. Here his name is used poetically for war or the warlike army.

155–8 The Queen is introduced. She is the widow of the former king Darius, and mother of the present king Xerxes. Darius is described as a god, which may reflect deification after his death, or a Greek belief that Persian kings were generally worshipped as gods.

179 **Ionians**: one of several Greek peoples. They lived on the west cost of Asia Minor and on many of the islands in the eastern Mediterranean. The Athenians saw themselves as related to the Ionians. However, the term may be used loosely here and elsewhere in the play, and is probably not meant to exclude other Greeks.

183 **Dorians**: another Greek people. They lived in the Peloponnese, for example, at Sparta. Athenians thought of Dorians as particularly austere ('Spartan', as we might say); hence they make a good contrast with Persian luxury. Again, it isn't clear whether other Greeks are meant to be excluded.

185–6 **one race**: see note on 76.

236 **Medes**: another term for the Persians.

238 **spring of silver**: a silver mine the Athenians had recently discovered on their territory (in Laurion).

250–5 It is usual practice for messengers in tragedy to give the headline news first, and only then start the detailed narrative.

302–30 Some of the names here are repeated from 21–58. The interpretation of some of the detail is uncertain, but probably not important for the overall meaning.

306 **island of Ajax**: Salamis. Ajax came from Salamis and was worshipped there.

310 **dove-breeding island**: an obscure reference, possibly also to Salamis.

394 **paean**: a ritual song, usually sung by young men on various occasions.

449 **dance-loving Pan**: one of various gods associated in several sources with the Greek victories over the Persians.

468 **He tore his robes**: tearing one's clothes is an act of mourning characteristic of women in classical Greece.

480–514 **Plataea**: the site of the decisive land battle, in Boeotia, see map 5.11, *BHAG*, p.134. This map also shows you Phocis, Thessaly, Macedonia and Thrace, regions the messenger names in describing the survivors' route back to Persia.

483 The Greek text as it has come down to us is corrupt here, as well as in a few other places (see 677, 981, 998 and 1076).

570 **Cychreia**: another word for Salamis.

595 **Ajax's sea-washed island**: see note on 306.

609–23 **libations**: offerings to the dead were usual cult practice in Greece.

630–80 Rather than merely making offerings to the dead, the chorus raise the ghost of Darius. Comparable scenes occur in some other Greek plays, and indeed in the *Odyssey*. It is difficult to be sure exactly how such scenes related to the audience's real-life experiences, such as worship of the dead.

651 **Darian**: an alternative form of the name Darius.

669 **Stygian**: relates to the Styx, the river in the underworld.

760–86 Most names in this catalogue of former Persian rulers are known from other sources, though probably not all of them are historical.

805 **the Asopos**: a Boeotian river, here evoking the battle site of Plataea.

810 **temples**: the Acropolis temples were at least partly still in ruins when *Persians* was produced.

817 **Doric spears**: a reference to the Spartan leadership at Plataea (see note on 183).

865–907 The chorus reminisce about Darius' large empire. Darius himself was able to stay at home in the Persian heartlands east of the river Halys, when his troops took various regions. These regions are: Thrace (where the gulf of Strymon is, and probably also the otherwise unknown Acheloios); the area around the Hellespont; and the islands close to the Asian mainland (e.g. Lesbos, Samos). He also governed some islands further away from Asia (e.g. Lemnos, Ikaria) and the Greek cities on the coast of Asia Minor.

939 **Mariandynia**: part of the Persian empire. Its inhabitants were probably known for their passionate laments.

958–99 Many of the names of the Persian dead are otherwise unknown; some are recalled from lines 21–58.

1054 **Mysia**: like Mariandynia, part of the Persian empire, and known for its laments.

Reading 2.2 Pausanias 1.15: The *Stoa Poikilē*

(Source: Levi, P. (trans.) (1971) Pausanias: *Guide to Greece*, vol.1, 1.15, Hardmondsworth: Penguin, pp.45–6)

This colonnade has first of all the Athenians on it, drawn up at Oinoe in the Argolid against Spartans. This is not a painting of the full event, the rage of battle, or particular deeds of daring, but the first moments of a battle as the armies come to grips. On the middle part of the walls Theseus and his Athenians are fighting Amazons. Only with women is it true that nothing bad that happens to them can take away their appetite for trouble. Themiskyra fell to Herakles and the fighting force they sent against Athens was wiped out, and yet they still went to Troy and fought there against Athens and the whole of Greece. Next to the Amazons, the Greeks have just taken Troy and the princes are meeting over Ajax's crime against Kassandra; the painting shows Ajax and the wives of the prisoners of war with Kassandra among them. The last part of the painting is the men who fought at Marathon; the Boiotians from Plataia and men from all over Attica are coming to grips with the barbarians: things are about equal. But in the heart of the battle the barbarians are in flight, pushing each other into the marsh, and the painting ends with the Phoenician ships, and with Greeks slaughtering barbarians as they jump into them. The hero Marathon, from whom the level ground got its name, is standing there, with Theseus rising out of the earth, and Athene and Herakles. The people of Marathon reckon to have been the first to believe Herakles was a god. In the picture of the fighting, you can most clearly make out Kallimachos, who was chosen to be chief Athenian general, and General Miltiades, and the divine hero Echetlos.

Reading 2.3 Herodotus 7.43: Xerxes at Troy

(Source: de Sélincourt, A. (trans.) revised by J. Marincola (2003) Herodotus: *The Histories*, 7.43, London: Penguin, p.433)

When the army reached the Scamander, the first river since the march from Sardis began which failed to provide enough water for men and beasts, Xerxes had a strong desire to see Troy, the ancient city of Priam. Accordingly he went up into the citadel, and when he had seen what he wanted to see and heard the story of the place from the people there, he sacrificed a thousand oxen to the Trojan Athene, and the Magi made libations of wine to the heroes.

Reading 2.4 Herodotus 7.150–1: The refusal of Argos

(Source: de Sélincourt, A. (trans.) revised by J. Marincola (2003) Herodotus: *The Histories*, 7.150–1, London: Penguin, p.467)

150 So much for the Argive account of this transaction; there is, however, another story current throughout Greece, to the effect that Xerxes sent a man to Argos before his army started on its march. 'Men of Argos,' this person is supposed to have said upon his arrival, 'King Xerxes has a message for you. We Persians believe that we are descended from Perses, whose father was Danae's son Perseus, and whose mother was Andromeda the daughter of Cepheus. Thus we are of the same blood as yourselves, and it would not be right for us to make war upon the people from whom we have sprung, any more than it would be right for you to help others by opposing us. Rather you should hold aloof from the coming struggle and take no part in it. If things turn out as I hope they will, there is no people I shall hold in greater esteem than you.'

151 The story goes on to say that the Argives were much impressed by Xerxes' message; they made no promises for the moment, and put forward no demand for a

share in the command of the army; later, however, when the Greeks were trying to obtain their support, they did make the claim, because they knew that the Spartans would refuse to grant it, and that they would thus have an excuse for taking no part in the war. There are people in Greece who say that this account is borne out by a remark made long afterwards by Artaxerxes. Callias, the son of Hipponicus, and a number of other Athenians were in Susa, the city of Memnon, on different business, and it so happened that their visit coincided with that of some representatives from Argos, who had been sent to ask Xerxes' son Artaxerxes if the friendly relations, which the Argives had established with his father, still held good, or if they were now considered by Persia as enemies. 'They do indeed hold good,' Artaxerxes is said to have replied; 'there is no city which I believe to be a better friend to me than Argos.'

Reading 2.5 Pausanias 1.23.8–1.24.4: The Acropolis

(Source: Levi, P. (trans.) (1979 [1971]) *Pausanias: Guide to Greece*, vol.1, 1.23.8–1.24.4, Hardmondsworth: Penguin, pp.66–9)

1.23.8 Among other things I saw on the Acropolis of Athens were the bronze boy with the sprinkler and Perseus after murdering Medusa. The boy is by Myron's son Lykios, the Perseus by Myron himself.
1.23.9 There is also a sanctuary of Brauronian Artemis: the statue is the work of Praxiteles. The goddess gets her name from the settlement called Brauron, where her ancient wooden cult-statue still is: they call her the Artemis of Tauris.
1.23.10 There is also a bronze Wooden Horse. Anyone who does not suppose Phrygians are utterly stupid will have realised that what Epeios built was an engineer's device for breaking down the wall. The story goes of that horse that the bravest of the Greeks were inside it, and this bronze horse is made in the same way. Menestheus and Teukros are stepping down from it, and the sons of Theseus as well.
1.23.11 As for the statues standing behind the horse, the portrait of Epicharinos running in armour is by Kritios, and Oinobios is a person who did a great kindness to Thucydides. Oinobios carried the vote recalling Thucydides from exile; he was treacherously murdered on his way home: his memorial is not far from the Melitian gates.
1.23.12 Others have written about Hermolykos the all-in wrestler and about Phormion, so I shall leave them out, though I have this much to add about Phormion. He was like an upper-class Athenian and came from a glorious enough family, but it happened Phormion was in debt; so he retired to the country town of Paiania and when Athens chose him as admiral he refused to sail, because being in debt he was incapable of facing his troops until he was out of it. Athens wanted Phormion in command at all costs, so they paid off all his debts.
1.24.1 Here Athene is represented striking Marsyas the Silenos for picking up the flutes that she wanted thrown away.
1.24.2 Opposite the works I have been talking about is the legendary battle of Theseus with the Minotaur, whether it was man or monster as the established story claims; even in our time women have produced much more amazing monsters than this one. Here is Phrixos carried away to Kolchis by the ram: he has sacrificed the ram to some god, perhaps the one called Laphystios at Orchomenos, who is cutting up the thighs in the Greek traditional way, and watching them burn. There are a series of other images including Herakles, strangling the serpents according to the legend. Athene rises from the head of Zeus ...
1.24.3 ... There is also a statue of Earth begging Zeus to rain on her, either because the Athenians needed rain or because there was a drought all over Greece.

Konon's son Timotheos and Konon himself are here too. Alkamenes dedicated Prokne and Itys; Prokne has decided to murder her son. Athene reveals the olive-tree and Poseidon the sea-wave.
1.24.4 Here is Leochares' statue of Zeus, here is Zeus of the City, whose traditional sacrifice I shall describe, but I shall not give its legendary origin. They put barley mixed with wheat on the altar of Zeus of the City and leave it unguarded. The steer they have ready for sacrifice visits the altar and touches the grains. They call one of the priests the steer-killer; he drops the axe and runs away. That is the ritual. Then, as if they did not know who had committed this act, they bring up the axe for trial. They do it in the way I describe.

Reading 2.6 Pausanias 1.24.5 and 7: The Parthenon

(Source: Levi, P. (trans.) (1979 [1971]) Pausanias: *Guide to Greece*, vol.1, 1.24.5 and 7, Hardmondsworth: Penguin, pp.69–70)

1.24.5 As you enter the Parthenon, all the figures on the pediment are related to the birth of Athene. The far side shows the contest of Poseidon and Athene for possession of the land. The image itself is made of ivory and gold. Its helmet is surmounted in the middle by a sphinx and griffins worked in on either side ...
1.24.7 ... the statue of Athene stands upright, in a garment reaching to her feet with the head of Medusa carved in ivory on her breast. She holds a Victory about eight feet high, with a spear in her other hand and a shield lying at her feet, with a snake near the spear, which might be Erichthonios. The plinth of the statue is carved with the birth of Pandora.

Reading 2.7 Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 12–13

(Source: Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 12–13)

(Plutarch (*c.*CE 50–120), from Chaironea, was a philosopher and biographer. His *Parallel Lives* of famous people, from which the following extracts are taken, have primarily an ethical aim, the provision of moral examples from history for emulation. Although he cannot be considered as a consistently reliable historical source for events which occurred six hundred years previously, his *Lives* do contain valuable historical information not found elsewhere.)
12.3 Pericles used to tell the demos that it was not obliged to give an account to the allies of how their money was spent provided it carried on the war for them and kept the barbarians [i.e. the Persians] at bay. 'They give us not a single horse, not a ship nor a hoplite, but they supply only money, which belongs not to the givers but the receivers, as long as they give in return that for which they collect it.
12.4 'And it is fair that the city, once she has been equipped with what is necessary for war, should turn the surplus over to works which, when completed, will bring her everlasting glory, and while being built will convert that surplus to immediate use. In this way a variety of activities and enterprises will emerge which will inspire every art and stir every hand until almost the whole city will be under contract, so that she can beautify herself while supporting herself from her own resources.'
12.5 Those who were in the prime of manhood could be supplied on military expeditions with abundant resources from the public funds. But he was also concerned that the disorderly and common mob should not lack a share in the public money nor be paid for laziness and doing nothing; so he boldly put before them ambitious proposals for public works and designs for projects which would involve many arts and require a long period of time to complete, so that those who stayed at home no less than sailors or soldiers or those on garrison duty, should have a pretext for enjoying a share of the city's prosperity.

12.6 The materials to be used were stone, bronze, ivory, gold, ebony and cypress-wood; the crafts which would be involved in working and fashioning these materials were those of carpenter, modeller, bronze-smith, stone-mason, dyer, worker in gold and ivory, painter, embroiderer, engraver, and, besides these, carriers and suppliers of the materials such as merchants, traders, sailors, pilots for sea-borne traffic, and, by land, waggon-makers, trainers of yoked animals and drivers.
12.7 There were also rope-makers, weavers, leather-workers, roadbuilders and miners. Each particular craft, like a general with an army under his separate command, kept its own throng of unskilled labourers, to be like an instrument obeying the player, or the body the soul, until by such demands the city's prosperity was distributed and scattered far and wide, covering almost every age and capacity.
13.1 So the buildings were erected, as imposing in their sheer size as inimitable in the grace of their outlines, since the craftsmen eagerly competed to surpass themselves in the beauty of their workmanship. And yet most wonderful of all was the speed of the operation. Each project, it was thought, would scarcely be completed within several generations; yet they were all finished in the high summer of one administration.
13.2 And yet, it is said that once when Agatharchos the painter was boasting loudly of the speed and facility with which he made his figures, Zeuxis overheard and said 'Mine take, and last, a long time.' And it is true that dexterity and swiftness of execution rarely give the work a lasting value or delicacy of beauty. Length of time, put out on loan for the labour of creation, pays back interest later in preserving it.
13.3 This is why the works of Pericles are the more to be wondered at, in that they were created in a short space of time, and yet, for all time. Each object was venerable in its beauty the moment it was created; yet, at the same time, even to this day, it seems vigorous and newly created. Such is the bloom of eternal freshness on his works, which seems to preserve them from the hand of time as if they had been infused by some ageless spirit of youth, some unfading vitality.
13.4 His director and general overseer was Pheidias, although the individual buildings had various great architects and artists employed on them. For instance, Kallikrates and Iktinos were the architects of the Parthenon with its *cella* one hundred feet long; it was Koroibos who began to build the sanctuary of initiation into the Mysteries [*Telesterion*] at Eleusis, and he himself erected the columns at ground-level and placed the architraves on the capitals; on his death, Metagenes of Xypete added the frieze and the upper colonnade; Xenokles, of the deme of Cholargos crowned it with the lantern over the shrine.
13.5 Kallikrates was the contractor for the long wall, about which Socrates says that he himself heard Pericles making the proposal ...
13.6 Then Pericles, seeking for honour, got a decree passed to establish a musical contest as part of the Panathenaic festival; he himself was elected steward and laid down rules as to how the competitors should play the flute, sing or perform on the lyre. At this time and thenceforward these musical contests were attended in the Odeion.
13.7 The Propylaia of the Acropolis, of which the architect was Mnesikles, was completed in the space of five years. While it was being constructed, a wonderful thing happened which indicated that the goddess [i.e. Athena] was not standing aloof but was helping in furthering and completing the project.
13.8 One of the workmen, the most energetic and active of them, lost his footing and fell from a great height and lay in a serious condition, despaired of by the doctors. Pericles was very distressed, but the goddess appeared to him in a dream and prescribed a course of treatment; when Pericles applied this the man recovered easily and quickly. To commemorate this, Pericles set up the bronze statue of

Athena Hygieia [i.e. 'Healer'] on the Acropolis, near the altar dedicated to that goddess which they say was there before.
13.9 But it was Pheidias who directed the making of the great golden statue of the goddess, and his name is duly inscribed upon the *stele* as its creator. Almost everything was under his charge, and all the craftsmen were under his orders because of his friendship with Pericles.

Reading 2.8 Thucydides 2.34–46: Pericles' Funeral Speech

(Source: Crawley, R. (trans.) (1997) *Thucydides: The History of the Peloponnesian War*, 2.34–46, Ware: Wordsworth Editions, pp.93–100)

2.34 In the same winter the Athenians gave a funeral at the public cost to those who had first fallen in this war. It was a custom of their ancestors, and the manner of it is as follows. Three days before the ceremony, the bones of the dead are laid out in a tent which has been erected; and their friends bring to their relatives such offerings as they please. In the funeral procession cypress coffins are borne in cars, one for each tribe; the bones of the deceased being placed in the coffin of their tribe. Among these is carried one empty bier decked for the missing, that is, for those whose bodies could not be recovered. Any citizen or stranger who pleases, joins in the procession: and the female relatives are there to wail at the burial. The dead are laid in the public sepulchre in the Beautiful suburb of the city, in which those who fall in war are always buried; with the exception of those slain at Marathon, who for their singular and extraordinary valour were interred on the spot where they fell. After the bodies have been laid in the earth, a man chosen by the state, of approved wisdom and eminent reputation, pronounces over them an appropriate panegyric; after which all retire. Such is the manner of the burying; and throughout the whole of the war, whenever the occasion arose, the established custom was observed. Meanwhile these were the first that had fallen, and Pericles, son of Xanthippus, was chosen to pronounce their eulogium. When the proper time arrived, he advanced from the sepulchre to an elevated platform in order to be heard by as many of the crowd as possible, and spoke as follows:
2.35 'Most of my predecessors in this place have commended him who made this speech part of the law, telling us that it is well that it should be delivered at the burial of those who fall in battle. For myself, I should have thought that the worth which had displayed itself in deeds, would be sufficiently rewarded by honours also shown by deeds; such as you now see in this funeral prepared at the people's cost. And I could have wished that the reputations of many brave men were not to be imperilled in the mouth of a single individual, to stand or fall according as he spoke well or ill. For it is hard to speak properly upon a subject where it is even difficult to convince your hearers that you are speaking the truth. On the one hand, the friend who is familiar with every fact of the story, may think that some point has not been set forth with that fullness which he wishes and knows it to deserve; on the other, he who is a stranger to the matter may be led by envy to suspect exaggeration if he hears anything above his own nature. For men can endure to hear others praised only so long as they can severally persuade themselves of their own ability to equal the actions recounted; when this point is passed, envy comes in and with it incredulity. However, since our ancestors have stamped this custom with their approval, it becomes my duty to obey the law and to try to satisfy your several wishes and opinions as best I may.
2.36 'I shall begin with our ancestors: it is both just and proper that they should have the honour of the first mention on an occasion like the present. They dwelt in the country without break in the succession from generation to generation, and handed it down free to the present time by their valour. And if our more remote

ancestors deserve praise, much more do our own fathers, who added to their inheritance the empire which we now possess, and spared no pains to be able to leave their acquisitions to us of the present generation. Lastly, there are few parts of our dominions that have not been augmented by those of us here, who are still more or less in the vigour of life; while the mother country has been furnished by us with everything that can enable her to depend on her own resources whether for war or for peace. That part of our history which tells of the military achievements which gave us our several possessions or of the ready valour with which either we or our fathers stemmed the tide of Hellenic or foreign aggression, is a theme too familiar to my hearers for me to dilate on, and I shall therefore pass it by. But what was the road by which we reached our position, what the form of government under which our greatness grew, what the national habits out of which it sprang; these are questions which I may try to solve before I proceed to my panegyric upon these men; since I think this to be a subject upon which on the present occasion a speaker may properly dwell, and to which the whole assemblage, whether citizen or foreigners, may listen with advantage.

2.37 'Our constitution does not copy the laws of neighbouring states; we are rather a pattern to others than imitators ourselves. Its administration favours the many instead of the few; this is why it is called a democracy. If we look to the laws, they afford equal justice to all in their private differences; if not social standing, advancement in public life falls to reputation for capacity, class considerations not being allowed to interfere with merit; nor again does poverty bar the way, if a man is able to serve the state, he is not hindered by the obscurity of his condition. The freedom which we enjoy in our government extends also to our ordinary life. There, far from exercising a jealous surveillance over each other, we do not feel called upon to be angry with our neighbour for doing what he likes, or even to indulge in those injurious looks which cannot fail to be offensive, although they inflict no positive penalty. But all this ease in our private relations does not make us lawless as citizens. Against this fear is our chief safeguard, teaching us to obey the magistrates and the laws, particularly such as regard the protection of the injured, whether they are actually on the statute book, or belong to that code which, although unwritten, yet cannot be broken without acknowledged disgrace.

2.38 'Further, we provide plenty of means for the mind to refresh itself from business. We celebrate games and sacrifices all the year round, and the elegance of our private establishments forms a daily source of pleasure and helps to banish the spleen; while the magnitude of our city draws the produce of the world into our harbour, so that to the Athenian the fruits of other countries are as familiar a luxury as those of his own.

2.39 'If we turn to our military policy, there also we differ from our antagonists. We throw open our city to the world, and never by alien acts exclude foreigners from any opportunity of learning or observing, although the eyes of an enemy may occasionally profit by our liberality; trusting less in system and policy than to the native spirit of our citizens; while in education, where our rivals from their very cradles by a painful discipline seek after manliness, at Athens we live exactly as we please, and yet are just as ready to encounter every legitimate danger. In proof of this it may be noticed that the Lacedaemonians do not invade our country alone, but bring with them all their confederates; while we Athenians advance unsupported into the territory of a neighbour, and fighting upon a foreign soil usually vanquish with ease men who are defending their homes. Our united force was never yet encountered by any enemy, because we have at once to attend to our navy and to dispatch our citizens by land upon a hundred different services; so that, wherever they engage with some such fraction of our strength, a success against a detachment is magnified into a victory over the nation, and a defeat into a reverse

suffered at the hands of our entire people. And yet if with habits not of labour but of ease, and courage not of art but of nature, we are still willing to encounter danger, we have the double advantage of escaping the experience of hardships in anticipation and of facing them in the hour of need as fearlessly as those who are never free from them.

2.40 'Nor are these the only points in which our city is worthy of admiration. We cultivate refinement without extravagance and knowledge without effeminacy; wealth we employ more for use than for show, and place the real disgrace of poverty not in owning to the fact but in declining the struggle against it. Our public men have, besides politics, their private affairs to attend to, and our ordinary citizens, though occupied with the pursuits of industry, are still fair judges of public matters; for, unlike any other nation, regarding him who takes no part in these duties not as unambitious but as useless, we Athenians are able to judge at all events if we cannot originate, and instead of looking on discussion as a stumbling-block in the way of action, we think it an indispensable preliminary to any wise action at all. Again, in our enterprises we present the singular spectacle of daring and deliberation, each carried to its highest point, and both united in the same persons; although usually decision is the fruit of ignorance, hesitation of reflection. But the palm of courage will surely be adjudged most justly to those, who best know the difference between hardship and pleasure and yet are never tempted to shrink from danger. In generosity we are equally singular, acquiring our friends by conferring, not by receiving, favours. Yet, of course, the doer of the favour is the firmer friend of the two, in order by continued kindness to keep the recipient in his debt; while the debtor feels less keenly from the very consciousness that the return he makes will be a payment, not a free gift. And it is only the Athenians who, fearless of consequences, confer their benefits not from calculations of expediency, but in the confidence of liberality.

2.41 'In short, I say that as a city we are the school of Hellas; while I doubt if the world can produce a man, who where he has only himself to depend upon, is equal to so many emergencies, and graced by so happy a versatility, as the Athenian. And that this is no mere boast thrown out for the occasion, but plain matter of fact, the power of the state acquired by these habits proves. For Athens alone of her contemporaries is found when tested to be greater than her reputation, and alone gives no occasion to her assailants to blush at the antagonist by whom they have been worsted, or to her subjects to question her title by merit to rule. Rather, the admiration of the present and succeeding ages will be ours, since we have not left our power without witness, but have shown it by mighty proofs; and far from needing a Homer for our panegyrist, or other of his craft whose verses might charm for the moment only for the impression which they gave to melt at the touch of fact, we have forced every sea and land to be the highway of our daring, and everywhere, whether for evil or for good, have left imperishable monuments behind us. Such is the Athens for which these men, in the assertion of their resolve not to lose her, nobly fought and died; and well may every one of their survivors be ready to suffer in her cause.

2.42 'Indeed if I have dwelt at some length upon the character of our country, it has been to show that our stake in the struggle is not the same as theirs who have no such blessings to lose, and also that the panegyric of the men over whom I am now speaking might be by definite proofs established. The panegyric is now in a great measure complete; for the Athens that I have celebrated is only what the heroism of these and their like have made her, men whose fame, unlike that of most Hellenes, will be found to be only commensurate with their deserts. And if a test of worth be wanted, it is to be found in their closing scene, and this not only in the cases in which it set the final seal upon their merit, but also in those in which it

gave the first intimation of their having any. For there is justice in the claim that steadfastness in his country's battles should be as a cloak to cover a man's other imperfections; since the good action has blotted out the bad, and his merit as a citizen more than outweighed his demerits as an individual. But none of these allowed either wealth with its prospect of future enjoyment to unnerve his spirit, or poverty with its hope of a day of freedom and riches to tempt him to shrink from danger. No, holding that vengeance upon their enemies was more to be desired than any personal blessings, and reckoning this to be the most glorious of hazards, they joyfully determined to accept the risk, to make sure of their vengeance and to let their wishes wait; and while committing to hope the uncertainty of final success, in the business before them they thought fit to act boldly and trust in themselves. Thus choosing to die resisting, rather than to live submitting, they fled only from dishonour, but met danger face to face, and after one brief moment, while at the summit of their fortune, escaped, not from their fear, but from their glory.

2.43 'So died these men as became Athenians. You, their survivors, must determine to have as unfaltering a resolution in the field, though you may pray that it may have a happier issue. And not contented with ideas derived only from words of the advantages which are bound up with the defence of your country, though these would furnish a valuable text to a speaker even before an audience so alive to them as the present, you must yourselves realise the power of Athens, and feed your eyes upon her from day to day, till love of her fills your hearts; and then when all her greatness shall break upon you, you must reflect that it was by courage, sense of duty, and a keen feeling of honour in action that men were enabled to win all this, and that no personal failure in an enterprise could make them consent to deprive their country of their valour, but they laid it at her feet as the most glorious contribution that they could offer. For this offering of their lives made in common by them all they each of them individually received that renown which never grows old, and for a sepulchre, not so much that in which their bones have been deposited, but that noblest of shrines wherein their glory is laid up to be eternally remembered upon every occasion on which deed or story shall call for its commemoration. For heroes have the whole earth for their tomb; and in lands far from their own, where the column with its epitaph declares it, there is enshrined in every breast a record unwritten with no tablet to preserve it, except that of the heart. These take as your model, and judging happiness to be the fruit of freedom and freedom of valour, never decline the dangers of war. For it is not the miserable that would most justly be unsparing of their lives; these have nothing to hope for: it is rather they to whom continued life may bring reverses as yet unknown, and to whom a fall, if it came, would be most tremendous in its consequences. And surely, to a man of spirit, the degradation of cowardice must be immeasurably more grievous than the unfelt death which strikes him in the midst of his strength and patriotism!

2.44 'Comfort, therefore, not condolence, is what I have to offer to the parents of the dead who may be here. Numberless are the chances to which, as they know, the life of man is subject; but fortunate indeed are they who draw for their lot a death so glorious as that which has caused your mourning, and to whom life has been so exactly measured as to terminate in the happiness in which it has been passed. Still I know that this is a hard saying, especially when those are in question of whom you will constantly be reminded by seeing in the homes of others blessings of which once you also boasted: for grief is felt not so much for the want of what we have never known, as for the loss of that to which we have been long accustomed. Yet you who are still of an age to beget children must bear up in the hope of having others in their stead; not only will they help you to forget those whom you have lost, but will be to the state at once a reinforcement and a security; for never can a fair

or just policy be expected of the citizen who does not, like his fellows, bring to the decision the interests and apprehensions of a father. While those of you who have passed your prime must congratulate yourselves with the thought that the best part of your life was fortunate, and that the brief span that remains will be cheered by the fame of the departed. For it is only the love of honour that never grows old, and honour it is, not gain, as some would have it, that rejoices the heart of age and helplessness.

2.45 'Turning to the sons or brothers of the dead, I see an arduous struggle before you. When a man is gone, all are wont to praise him, and should your merit be ever so transcendent, you will still find it difficult not merely to overtake, but even to approach their renown. The living have envy to contend with, while those who are no longer in our path are honoured with a goodwill into which rivalry does not enter. On the other hand, if I must say anything on the subject of female excellence to those of you who will now be in widowhood, it will be all comprised in this brief exhortation. Great will be your glory in not falling short of your natural character, and greatest will be hers who is least talked of among the men whether for good or for bad.

2.46 'My task is now finished. I have performed it to the best of my ability, and in word, at least, the requirements of the law are now satisfied. If deeds be in question, those who are here interred have received part of their honours already, and for the rest, their children will be brought up till manhood at the public expense: the state thus offers a valuable prize, as the garland of victory in this race of valour, for the reward both of these who have fallen and their survivors. And where the rewards of merit are greatest, there are found the best citizens.

'And now that you have brought to a close your lamentations for your relatives, you may depart.'

Reading 2.9 Translator's introduction to Thucydides

(Source: Crawley, R. (trans.) (1997) *Thucydides: The History of the Peloponnesian War*, Ware: Wordsworth Editions, pp.xxvii–xxix)

I began this translation when I was still almost a schoolboy, very much in love with my author, and sufficiently simple to think that all the world must be eager to read Thucydides. The publication of the first book very quickly convinced me of my error; nobody took the least notice of my labours, and I had not even the satisfaction of hearing them abused. Although not a little discouraged by this indifference, I nevertheless translated the second book some time afterwards, being now actuated, not by any idea of fame or usefulness, but merely by an instinctive wish to finish what I had once begun. In the course of the year 1873 I completed the remaining six books, and now offer the whole work to the public in the hope that it may meet with the attention which a fragment failed to obtain. It is not for me to say how it is executed; but I think I have bestowed more care on my work than is often given by labourers in so unprofitable a field, and if I have failed in doing justice to my original, it is from the innate difficulty of the task, or my own want of the proper ability, and not from any lack of diligence. I have throughout attempted to convey the meaning of my author, not only as faithfully but as clearly as possible, and to avoid the intrusion of the Greek idioms which so often disfigure translations, rendering them only fit for pedants or schoolboys. If I have not completely succeeded in this last endeavour, I hope the reader will consider the nature of the undertaking, and hold me absolved for my good intention.

Since the time when Thucydides was first read in England, the number of good histories has so much increased, and the domain of history itself has been so much enlarged, that it would be vain to claim for his work the importance which it once possessed. The days are past in which the translation of a Greek author could attain

to the proportions of a national event. The modern world has now teachers of its own; and classical literature, which might formerly have been called the Bible of all men, is rapidly becoming the book of a learned class. If Mr Cobden really said that a file of *The Times* newspaper is worth all the works of Thucydides, he after all only expressed openly an opinion which a great number of educated men unconsciously assent to. There is, however, perhaps more resemblance between the newspaper and the historian than has been generally perceived. They both treat of contemporary events and of states of society, politically, very like each other. A lamented historian was able to fight the battle of English party politics under the names of 'Nicias' and 'Cleon', and there are probably few books that have so much contributed to the spread of liberal opinions in modern England as Mr Grote's reflections upon the affairs of ancient Greece. Indeed, as Arnold remarked, the portion of history dealt with by Thucydides is only ancient in the sense that the events related happened a long while ago; in all other respects it is more modern than the history of our own countrymen in the Middle Ages. If the reader of the newspaper will condescend to cast an eye on my translation, he will find there the prototypes of many of the figures to which he is accustomed in his favourite journal. He will discover the political freedom which he glories in, and the social liberty which he sometimes sighs for, in full operation at Athens; factions as fierce as those of the Versaillais and Communists at Corcyra; and in the 'best men' of the four hundred oligarchs as self-seeking and unpatriotic as the *gens du bien* of the *Figaro*. He will see the doctrine of arbitration, welcomed as a newly discovered panacea by our amiable enthusiasts, more firmly established in theory than it is yet likely to be in modern Europe, and as impotent to avert the evils of war from the communities who provided for it in every treaty, and invoked it whenever it seemed their interest to do so. In short, besides the practical lessons to be drawn for his own conduct, he will enjoy the philosophic pleasure of observing how the nature of man, in spite of all changes of time and circumstance, remains essentially the same, and how short is the distance from the civilized inhabitant of Athens or Corinth to the dweller in London or Vienna. The reader will also see that nature painted in its true colours, free from the varnish with which it is often decorated. The actors in our author's pages avow their motives with a plainness sometimes shocking to modern feeling; whether it be that we have an improved standard of right, to which even the most determined offenders must do homage, or that hypocrisy is more congenial to our artificial civilization, and less difficult than it must have been in the intense political life of the small Greek communities. Finally, there are certain qualities in which the historian of the Peloponnesian war has never been surpassed. Apart from his profound knowledge of human nature, and the passion and dramatic interest which he infuses into the events which he relates, if brevity, impartiality, and a sparing use of the imagination are still regarded as merits in an historian, more than one eminent writer might well take a lesson from Thucydides. I may point, as an example, to his celebrated account of the plague of Athens. In five short pages he has set forth the symptoms of the disorder with a precision which a physician might envy, and the suffering and moral anarchy which it produced with a vividness which may teach the lover of picturesque description how much force there lies in truth and simplicity. The troubles at Corcyra are related at not much greater length, with a few masterly touches that appeal to the imagination more powerfully than the most detailed history, and a fullness of philosophic reflection that has left little to be said by his successors on the evils of a time of revolution. Among the number of English men and women who, without being Greek scholars, take an interest in Grecian history, there may perhaps be some enough in earnest not to be deterred from testing the truth of these assertions by the unavoidable dullness of a translation.

R. CRAWLEY 1876

A note on the translator and the translation

(Source: Hardwick, L. in R. Crawley (trans.) (1997) *Thucydides: The History of the Peloponnesian War*, Ware: Wordsworth Editions, pp. xxiii–xxiv.)

Richard Crawley (1840–93) was the son of a clergyman. His mother's educational background is not recorded. He was educated at Marlborough and University College, Oxford, where he took a first in both Mods and Greats. He was a Fellow of Worcester College (1866–80), and was called to the bar, although he never practised. His translation of Book 1 of Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War* was published in 1866, with the complete work following in 1874. He also published *Horse and Foot: or Pilgrims to Parnassus* (1868), a satire imitating the style of Pope; *Venus and Psyche, with other poems* (1871); *The Younger Brother*, a comedy in five acts (1878); and *Election Rhymes* (1880), a selection of epigrams and political verses which had appeared in the Conservative papers. He spent some years abroad but then became increasingly involved with business in London, becoming chairman of London Amicable Assurance Co. in 1887. His obituary in *The Times* (8 April 1893) echoed the comments of *The Athenaeum* that he was a man 'of singularly ready wit, keen judgement and great knowledge' but that his 'able and vigorous translation of Thucydides ... did not meet with quite the recognition it deserved' and that his subsequent work produced 'nothing on a scale worthy of his really remarkable abilities'.

Crawley's translation was revised by R.C. Feetham in 1903 and has been reprinted many times. Crawley's approach reflects the incisive response to the nuances of language which is evident in his other work. It is also a product of the Victorian concern to produce rigorous translations from the Greek for use by men who would play a significant role in political and public life, industry and the administration of the Empire. Crawley's younger brother Charles took this a step further by teaching a Greek class at the Working Men's College in Great Ormond Street, of which he subsequently became Vice-Principal.

There was considerable debate in the nineteenth century, as now, about the relationship of ancient Greece, especially Athens, to modern politics and society. Some translators thought that 'distance' should be emphasised by the conscious use of archaisms. Others aimed at fluency and readability and followed Matthew Arnold's view that, provided it did not import anachronisms, the 'universality' of a text's scope could be conveyed. Quite apart from Crawley's need to convey Thucydides' own use of poetical vocabulary and archaism as a technique for writing about the past, there will be some Victorian 'fluencies' which strike the modern reader as archaisms. Thus the use of a nineteenth-century translation does inevitably and desirably distance Thucydides from the rapidly changing political discourse of the present day. This advantage is complemented by Crawley's determination to communicate the shape of the Greek, particularly in the antithetical structure of the speeches. Furthermore, although he attempted to resolve Thucydides' more obscure passages, he also succeeded in conveying the concentrated and sometimes tortuous quality of the original. In this respect, Crawley's approach differed significantly from that of another Victorian translator of Thucydides, Benjamin Jowett (2nd edition 1899), whose work, although widely acclaimed at the time, was subsequently criticised for its emphasis on communicating a general ethos rather than on providing a detailed rendering into English of the sometimes harsh and compressed Greek. Jowett's Thucydides has needed expert academic revision before use as a historical source (as opposed to a text in Victorian Studies), whereas Crawley's has not. This is a tribute both to Crawley's scholarship and to his sense of what it meant for Thucydides' work to be, as the author claimed, 'a possession for ever' (Thucydides 1.22).

Reading 2.10 Thucydides 2.13–14: Pericles' advice before the invasion

(Source: Crawley, R. (trans.) (1997) *Thucydides: The History of the Peloponnesian War*, 2.13–14, Ware: Wordsworth Editions, pp.83–5)

2.13 While the Peloponnesians were still mustering at the Isthmus, or on the march before they invaded Attica, Pericles, son of Xanthippus, one of the ten generals of the Athenians, finding that the invasion was to take place, conceived the idea that Archidamus, who happened to be his friend, might possibly pass by his estate without ravaging it. This he might do, either from a personal wish to oblige him, or acting under instructions from Lacedaemon for the purpose of creating a prejudice against him, as had been before attempted in the demand for the expulsion of the accursed family. He accordingly took the precaution of announcing to the Athenians in the assembly that, although Archidamus was his friend, yet this friendship should not extend to the detriment of the state, and that in case the enemy should make his houses and lands an exception to the rest and not pillage them, he at once gave them up to be public property, so that they should not bring him into suspicion. He also gave the citizens some advice on their present affairs in the same strain as before. They were to prepare for the war, and to carry in their property from the country. They were not to go out to battle, but to come into the city and guard it, and get ready their fleet, in which their real strength lay. They were also to keep a tight rein on their allies – the strength of Athens being derived from the money brought in by their payments, and success in war depending principally upon conduct and capital. Here they had no reason to despond. Apart from other sources of income, an average revenue of six hundred talents of silver was drawn from the tribute of the allies; and there were still six thousand talents of coined silver in the Acropolis, out of nine thousand seven hundred that had once been there, from which the money had been taken for the porch of the Acropolis, the other public buildings, and for Potidaea. This did not include the uncoined gold and silver in public and private offerings, the sacred vessels for the processions and games, the Median spoils, and similar resources to the amount of five hundred talents. To this he added the treasures of the other temples. These were by no means inconsiderable, and might fairly be used. Nay, if they were ever absolutely driven to it, they might take even the gold ornaments of Athene herself; for the statue contained forty talents of pure gold and it was all removable. This might be used for self-preservation, and must every penny of it be restored. Such was their financial position – surely a satisfactory one. Then they had an army of thirteen thousand heavy infantry, besides sixteen thousand more in the garrisons and on home duty at Athens. This was at first the number of men on guard in the event of an invasion: it was composed of the oldest and youngest levies and the resident aliens who had heavy armour. The Phaleric wall ran for four miles, before it joined that round the city; and of this last nearly five had a guard, although part of it was left without one, viz. that between the Long Wall and the Phaleric. Then there were the Long Walls to Piraeus, a distance of some four miles and a half, the outer of which was manned. Lastly, the circumference of Piraeus with Munychia was nearly seven miles and a half; only half of this, however, was guarded. Pericles also showed them that they had twelve hundred horse including mounted archers, with sixteen hundred archers unmounted, and three hundred triremes fit for service. Such were the resources of Athens in the different departments when the Peloponnesian invasion was impending and hostilities were being commenced. Pericles also urged his usual arguments for expecting a favourable issue to the war.

2.14 The Athenians listened to his advice, and began to carry in their wives and children from the country, and all their household furniture, even to the woodwork

of their houses which they took down. Their sheep and cattle they sent over to Euboea and the adjacent islands. But they found it hard to move, as most of them had been always used to live in the country.

Reading 2.11 Thucydides 1.21–2: Thucydides on writing history

(Source: Crawley, R. (trans.) (1997) *Thucydides: The History of the Peloponnesian War*, 1.21–2, Ware: Wordsworth Editions, pp.13–14)

1.21 On the whole, however, the conclusions I have drawn from the proofs quoted may, I believe, safely be relied on. Assuredly they will not be disturbed either by the lays of a poet displaying the exaggeration of his craft, or by the compositions of the chroniclers that are attractive at truth's expense; the subjects they treat of being out of the reach of evidence, and time having robbed most of them of historical value by enthroning them in the region of legend. Turning from these, we can rest satisfied with having proceeded upon the clearest data, and having arrived at conclusions as exact as can be expected in matters of such antiquity. To come to this war; despite the known disposition of the actors in a struggle to overrate its importance, and when it is over to return to their admiration of earlier events, yet an examination of the facts will show that it was much greater than the wars which preceded it.

1.22 With reference to the speeches in this history, some were delivered before the war began, others while it was going on; some I heard myself, others I got from various quarters; it was in all cases difficult to carry them word for word in one's memory, so my habit has been to make the speakers say what was in my opinion demanded of them by the various occasions, of course adhering as closely as possible to the general sense of what they really said. And with reference to the narrative of events, far from permitting myself to derive it from the first source that came to hand, I did not even trust my own impressions, but it rests partly on what I saw myself, partly on what others saw for me, the accuracy of the report being always tried by the most severe and detailed tests possible. My conclusions have cost me some labour from the want of coincidence between accounts of the same occurrences by different eye-witnesses, arising sometimes from imperfect memory, sometimes from undue partiality for one side or the other. The absence of romance in my history will, I fear, detract somewhat from its interest; but if it be judged useful by those inquirers who desire an exact knowledge of the past as an aid to the interpretation of the future, which in the course of human things must resemble if it does not reflect it, I shall be content. In fine, I have written my work, not as an essay which is to win the applause of the moment, but as a possession for all time.

Reading 2.12 Thucydides 2.47–54: The plague in Athens

(Source: Crawley, R. (trans.) (1997) *Thucydides: The History of the Peloponnesian War*, 2.47–54, Ware: Wordsworth Editions, pp.100–104)

2.47 Such was the funeral that took place during this winter, with which the first year of the war came to an end. In the first days of summer the Lacedaemonians and their allies, with two-thirds of their forces as before, invaded Attica, under the command of Archidamus, son of Zeuxidamus, king of Lacedaemon, and sat down and laid waste the country. Not many days after their arrival in Attica the plague first began to show itself among the Athenians. It was said that it had broken out in many places previously in the neighbourhood of Lemnos and elsewhere; but a pestilence of such extent and mortality was nowhere remembered. Neither were the physicians at first of any service, ignorant as they were of the proper way to treat it,

but they died themselves the most thickly, as they visited the sick most often; nor did any human art succeed any better. Supplications in the temples, divinations, and so forth were found equally futile, till the overwhelming nature of the disaster at last put a stop to them altogether.

2.48 It first began, it is said, in the parts of Ethiopia above Egypt, and thence descended into Egypt and Libya and into most of the king's country. Suddenly falling upon Athens, it first attacked the population in Piraeus – which was the occasion of their saying that the Peloponnesians had poisoned the reservoirs, there being as yet no wells there – and afterwards appeared in the upper city, when the deaths became much more frequent. All speculation as to its origin and its causes, if causes can be found adequate to produce so great a disturbance, I leave to other writers, whether lay or professional; for myself, I shall simply set down its nature, and explain the symptoms by which perhaps it may be recognised by the student, if it should ever break out again. This I can the better do, as I had the disease myself, and watched its operation in the case of others.

2.49 That year then is admitted to have been otherwise unprecedentedly free from sickness; and such few cases as occurred all determined in this. As a rule, however, there was no ostensible cause, but people in good health were all of a sudden attacked by violent heats in the head, and redness and inflammation in the eyes, the inward parts, such as the throat or tongue, becoming bloody and emitting an unnatural and fetid breath. These symptoms were followed by sneezing and hoarseness, after which the pain soon reached the chest, and produced a hard cough. When it fixed in the stomach, it upset it; and discharges of bile of every kind named by physicians ensued, accompanied by very great distress. In most cases also an ineffectual retching followed, producing violent spasms, which in some cases ceased soon after, in others much later. Externally the body was not very hot to the touch, nor pale in its appearance, but reddish, livid, and breaking out into small pustules and ulcers. But internally it burned so that the patient could not bear to have on him clothing or linen even of the very lightest description; or indeed to be otherwise than stark naked. What they would have liked best would have been to throw themselves into cold water, as indeed was done by some of the neglected sick, who plunged into the rain-tanks in their agonies of unquenchable thirst, though it made no difference whether they drank little or much. Besides this, the miserable feeling of not being able to rest or sleep never ceased to torment them. The body meanwhile did not waste away so long as the distemper was at its height, but held out to a marvel against it ravages; so that when they succumbed, as in most cases, on the seventh or eighth day to the internal inflammation, they had still some strength in them. But if they passed this stage, and the disease descended further into the bowels, inducing a violent ulceration there accompanied by severe diarrhoea, this brought on a weakness which was generally fatal. For the disorder first settled in the head, ran its course from thence through the whole of the body, and even where it did not prove mortal, it still left its mark on the extremities; for it settled in the privy parts, the fingers and the toes, and many escaped with the loss of these, some too with that of their eyes. Others again were seized with an entire loss of memory on their first recovery, and did not know either themselves or their friends.

2.50 But while the nature of the distemper was such as to baffle all description, and its attacks almost too grievous for human nature to endure, it was still in the following circumstance that its difference from all ordinary disorders was most clearly shown. All the birds and beasts that prey upon human bodies, either abstained from touching them (though there were many lying unburied), or died after tasting them. In proof of this it was noticed that birds of this kind actually disappeared; they were not about the bodies, or indeed to be seen at all. But of

course the effects which I have mentioned could best be studied in a domestic animal like the dog.

2.51 Such then, if we pass over the varieties of particular cases which were many and peculiar, were the general features of the distemper. Meanwhile the town enjoyed an immunity from all the ordinary disorders; or if any case occurred, it ended in this. Some died in neglect, others in the midst of every attention. No remedy was found that could be used as a specific; for what did good in one case, did harm in another. Strong and weak constitutions proved equally incapable of resistance, all alike being swept away, although dieted with the utmost precaution. By far the most terrible feature in the malady was the dejection which ensued when anyone felt himself sickening, for the despair into which they instantly fell took away their power of resistance, and left them a much easier prey to the disorder; besides which, there was the awful spectacle of men dying like sheep, through having caught the infection in nursing each other. This caused the greatest mortality. On the one hand, if they were afraid to visit each other, they perished from neglect; indeed many houses were emptied of their inmates for want of a nurse: on the other, if they ventured to do so, death was the consequence. This was especially the case with such as made any pretensions to goodness: honour made them unsparing of themselves in their attendance in their friends' houses, where even the members of the family were at last worn out by the moans of the dying, and succumbed to the force of the disaster. Yet it was with those who had recovered from the disease that the sick and the dying found most compassion. These knew what it was from experience, and had now no fear for themselves, for the same man was never attacked twice – never at least fatally. And such persons not only received the congratulations of others, but themselves also, in the elation of the moment, half entertained the vain hope that they were for the future safe from any disease whatsoever.

2.52 An aggravation of the existing calamity was the influx from the country into the city, and this was especially felt by the new arrivals. As there were no houses to receive them, they had to be lodged at the hot season of the year in stifling cabins, where the mortality raged without restraint. The bodies of dying men lay one upon another, and half-dead creatures reeled about the streets and gathered round all the fountains in their longing for water. The sacred places also in which they had quartered themselves were full of corpses of persons that had died there, just as they were; for as the disaster passed all bounds, men, not knowing what was to become of them, became utterly careless of everything, whether sacred of profane. All the burial rites before in use were entirely upset, and they buried the bodies as best they could. Many from want of the proper appliances, through so many of their friends having died already, had recourse to the most shameless sepultures: sometimes getting the start of those who had raised a pile, they threw their own dead body upon the stranger's pyre and ignited it; sometimes they tossed the corpse which they were carrying on the top of another that was burning, and so went off.

2.53 Nor was this the only form of lawless extravagance which owed its origin to the plague. Men now coolly ventured on what they had formerly done in a corner, and not just as they pleased, seeing the rapid transitions produced by persons in prosperity suddenly dying and those who before had nothing succeeding to their property. So they resolved to spend quickly and enjoy themselves, regarding their lives and riches as alike things of a day. Perseverance in what men called honour was popular with none, it was so uncertain whether they would be spared to attain the object; but it was settled that present enjoyment, and all that contributed to it, was both honourable and useful. Fear of gods or law of man there was none to restrain them. As for the first, they judged it to be just the same whether they worshipped them or not, as they saw all alike perishing; and for the last, no one

expected to live to be brought to trial for his offences, but each felt that a far severer sentence had been already passed upon them all and hung ever over their heads, and before this fell it was only reasonable to enjoy life a little.
2.54 Such was the nature of the calamity, and heavily did it weigh on the Athenians; death raging within the city and devastation without.

Reading 2.13 Thucydides 2.59–65: Pericles' last speech

(Source: Crawley, R. (trans.) (1997) *Thucydides: The History of the Peloponnesian War*, 2.59–65, Ware: Wordsworth Editions, pp.106–11)

2.59 After the second invasion of the Peloponnesians a change came over the spirit of the Athenians. Their land had now been twice laid waste; and war and pestilence at once pressed heavy upon them. They began to find fault with Pericles, as the author of the war and the cause of all their misfortunes, and became eager to come to terms with Lacedaemon, and actually sent ambassadors thither, who did not however succeed in their mission. Their despair was now complete and all vented itself upon Pericles. When he saw them exasperated at the present turn of affairs and acting exactly as he had anticipated, he called an assembly, being (it must be remembered) still general, with the double object of restoring confidence and of leading them from these angry feelings to a calmer and more hopeful state of mind. He accordingly came forward and spoke as follows:
2.60 'I was not unprepared for the indignation of which I have been the object, as I know its causes; and I have called an assembly for the purpose of reminding you upon certain points, and of protesting against your being unreasonably irritated with me, or cowed by your sufferings. I am of opinion that national greatness is more for the advantage of private citizens, than any individual wellbeing coupled with public humiliation. A man may be personally ever so well off, and yet if his country be ruined he must be ruined with it; whereas a flourishing commonwealth always affords chances of salvation to unfortunate individuals. Since then a state can support the misfortunes of private citizens, while they cannot support hers, it is surely the duty of everyone to be forward in her defence, and not like you to be so confounded with your domestic afflictions as to give up all thoughts of the common safety, and to blame me for having counselled war and yourselves for having voted it. And yet if you are angry with me, it is with one who, as I believe, is second to no man either in knowledge of the proper policy, or in the ability to expound it, and who is moreover not only a patriot but an honest one. A man possessing that knowledge without that faculty of exposition might as well have no idea at all on the matter: if he had both these gifts, but no love for his country, he would be but a cold advocate for her interests; while were his patriotism not proof against bribery, everything would go for a price. So that if you thought that I was even moderately distinguished for these qualities when you took my advice and went to war, there is certainly no reason now why I should be charged with having done wrong.
2.61 'For those of course who have a free choice in the matter and whose fortunes are not at stake, war is the greatest of follies. But if the only choice was between submission with loss of independence, and danger with the hope of preserving that independence, in such a case it is he who will not accept the risk that deserves blame, not he who will. I am the same man and do not alter, it is you who change, since in fact you took my advice while unhurt, and waited for misfortune to repent of it; and the apparent error of my policy lies in the infirmity of your resolution, since the suffering that it entails is being felt by every one among you, while its advantage is still remote and obscure to all, and a great and sudden reverse having befallen you, your mind is too much depressed to persevere in your resolves. For before what is sudden, unexpected, and least within calculation the spirit quails;

and putting all else aside, the plague has certainly been an emergency of this kind. Born, however, as you are, citizens of a great state, and brought up, as you have been, with habits equal to your birth, you should be ready to face the greatest disasters and still to keep unimpaired the lustre of your name. For the judgement of mankind is as relentless to the weakness that falls short of a recognised renown, as it is jealous of the arrogance that aspires higher than its due. Cease then to grieve for your private afflictions, and address yourselves instead to the safety of the commonwealth.

2.62 'If you shrink before the exertions which the war makes necessary, and fear that after all they may not have a happy result, you know the reasons by which I have often demonstrated to you the groundlessness of your apprehensions. If those are not enough, I will now reveal an advantage arising from the greatness of your dominion, which I think has never yet suggested itself to you, which I never mentioned in my previous speeches, and which has so bold a sound that I should scarce adventure it now, were it not for the unnatural depression which I see around me. You perhaps think that your empire extends only over your allies; I will declare to you the truth. The visible field of action has two parts, land and sea. In the whole of one of these you are completely supreme, not merely as far as you use it at present, but also to what further extent you may think fit: in fine, your naval resources are such that your vessels may go where they please, without the king or any other nation on earth being able to stop them. So that although you may think it a great privation to lose the use of your land and houses, still you must see that this power is something widely different, and instead of fretting on their account, you should really regard them in the light of the gardens and other accessories that embellish a great fortune, and as, in comparison, of little moment. You should know too that liberty preserved by your efforts will easily recover for us what we have lost, while, the knee once bowed, even what you have will pass from you. Your fathers receiving these possessions not from others, but from themselves, did not let slip what their labour had acquired, but delivered them safe to you; and in this respect at least you must prove yourselves their equals, remembering that to lose what one has got is more disgraceful than to be balked in getting, and you must confront your enemies not merely with spirit but with disdain. Confidence indeed a blissful ignorance can impart, ay, even to a coward's breast, but disdain is the privilege of those who, like us, have been assured by reflection of their superiority to their adversary. And where the chances are the same, knowledge fortifies courage by the contempt which is its consequence, its trust being placed, not in hope, which is the prop of the desperate, but in a judgement grounded upon existing resources, whose anticipations are more to be depended upon.

2.63 'Again, your country has a right to your services in sustaining the glories of her position. These are a common source of pride to you all, and you cannot decline the burdens of empire and still expect to share its honours. You should remember also that what you are fighting against is not merely slavery as an exchange for independence, but also loss of empire and danger from the animosities incurred in its exercise. Besides, to recede is no longer possible, if indeed any of you in the alarm of the moment has become enamoured of the honesty of such an unambitious part. For what you hold is, to speak somewhat plainly, a tyranny; to take it perhaps was wrong, but to let it go is unsafe. And men of these retiring views, making converts of others, would quickly ruin a state; indeed the result would be the same if they could live independent by themselves; for the retiring and unambitious are never secure without vigorous protectors at their side; in fine, such qualities are useless to an imperial city, though they may help a dependency to an unmolested servitude.

2.64 'But you must not be seduced by citizens like these or angry with me – who, if I voted for war, only did as you did yourselves – in spite of the enemy having invaded your country and done what you could be certain that he would do, if you refused to comply with his demands; and although besides what we counted for, the plague has come upon us – the only point indeed at which our calculation has been at fault. It is this, I know, that has had a large share in making me more unpopular than I should otherwise have been – quite undeservedly, unless you are also prepared to give me the credit of any success with which chance may present you. Besides, the hand of heaven must be borne with resignation, that of the enemy with fortitude; this was the old way at Athens, and do not you prevent it being so still. Remember, too, that if your country has the greatest name in all the world, it is because she never bent before disaster; because she has expended more life and effort in war than any other city, and has won for herself a power greater than any hitherto known, the memory of which will descend to the latest posterity; even if now, in obedience to the general law of decay, we should ever be forced to yield, still it will be remembered that we held rule over more Hellenes that any other Hellenic state, that we sustained the greatest wars against their united or separate powers, and inhabited a city unrivalled by any other in resources or magnitude. These glories may incur the censure of the slow and unambitious; but in the breast of energy they will awake emulation, and in those who must remain without them an envious regret. Hatred and unpopularity at the moment have fallen to the lot of all who have aspired to rule others; but where odium must be incurred, true wisdom incurs it for the highest objects. Hatred also is short-lived; but that which makes the splendour of the present and the glory of the future remains for ever unforgotten. Make your decision, therefore, for glory then and honour now, and attain both objects by instant and zealous effort: do not send heralds to Lacedaemon, and do not betray any sign of being oppressed by your present sufferings, since they whose minds are least sensitive to calamity, and whose hands are most quick to meet it, are the greatest men and the greatest communities.'

2.65 Such were the arguments by which Pericles tried to cure the Athenians of their anger against him and to divert their thoughts from their immediate afflictions. As a community he succeeded in convincing them; they not only gave up all idea of sending to Lacedaemon, but applied themselves with increased energy to the war; still as private individuals they could not help smarting under their sufferings, the common people having been deprived of the little that they were possessed, while the higher orders had lost fine properties with costly establishments and buildings in the country, and, worst of all, had war instead of peace. In fact, the public feeling against him did not subside until he had been fined. Not long afterwards, however, according to the way of the multitude, they again elected him general and committed all their affairs to his hands, having now become less sensitive to their private and domestic afflictions, and understanding that he was the best man of all for the public necessities. For as long as he was at the head of the state during the peace, he pursued a moderate and conservative policy; and in his time its greatness was at its height. When the war broke out, here also he seems to have rightly gauged the power of his country. He outlived its commencement two years and six months, and the correctness of his previsions respecting it became better known by his death. He told them to wait quietly, to pay attention to their navy, to attempt no new conquests, and to expose the city to no hazards during the war, and doing this, promised them a favourable result. What they did was the very contrary, allowing private ambitions and private interests, in matters apparently quite foreign to the war, to lead them into projects unjust both to themselves and to their allies – projects whose success would only conduce to the honour and advantage of private persons, and whose failure entailed certain disaster on the

country in the war. The causes of this are not far to seek. Pericles indeed, by his rank, ability, and known integrity, was enabled to exercise an independent control over the multitude – in short, to lead them instead of being led by them; for as he never sought power by improper means, he was never compelled to flatter them, but, on the contrary, enjoyed so high an estimation that he could afford to anger them by contradiction. Whenever he saw them unseasonably and insolently elated, he would with a word reduce them to alarm; on the other hand, if they fell victims to a panic, he could at once restore them to confidence. In short, what was nominally a democracy become in his hands government by the first citizen. With his successors it was different. More on a level with one another, and each grasping at supremacy, they ended by committing even the conduct of state affairs to the whims of the multitude. This, as might have been expected in a great and sovereign state, produced a host of blunders, and amongst them the Sicilian expedition; though this failed not so much through a miscalculation of the power of those against whom it was sent, as through a fault in the senders in not taking the best measures afterwards to assist those who had gone out, but choosing rather to occupy themselves with private cabals for the leadership of the commons, by which they not only paralysed operations in the field, but also first introduced civil discord at home. Yet after losing most of their fleet besides other forces in Sicily, and with faction already dominant in the city, they could still for three years make head against their original adversaries, joined not only by the Sicilians, but also by their own allies nearly all in revolt, and at last by the king's son, Cyrus, who furnished the funds for the Peloponnesian navy. Nor did they finally succumb till they fell the victims of their own intestine disorders. So superfluously abundant were the resources from which the genius of Pericles foresaw an easy triumph in the war over the unaided forces of the Peloponnesians.

Reading 2.14 (a) Speech concerning the dead, attributed to Gorgias, DK 82 B 63 (a semi-verse translation)[1]

(Source: Wills, G. (1992) *Lincoln at Gettysburg: the Words that Remade America*, New York: Simon & Schuster, pp.257–9)

What did these heroes lack
that becomes a hero?
Or what quality did they display
unbecoming to a hero?

O for the power to speak
what I desire to say,
and to desire what is fitting,
neither offending the gods
nor inciting human envy.

These men showed godlike valour,
but died the death of men,

[1] 'DK' stands for Diels, H. and Kranz, W. (eds) (1934–8, 5th edn, Berlin) *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, the standard Greek edition of fragments attributed to Gorgias and certain other authors of the period. The version in 2.14 (a) is translated and laid out in semi-verse form (as read on CD3). A literal translation by Kathleen Freeman appears as Reading 2.14 (b). It is worth thinking about the different effects of the two translations.

preferring gentle equity
to righteous austerity,
freedom of speech
to niceties of law,

holding the broadest law,
divine law, to be this:

to speak or not to speak,
to do or leave undone
the necessary things
at the necessary time,

to show the indispensable virtues,
prudence and firmness,
one for choosing a course,
the other for pursuing it,

supporting those unjustly oppressed,
opposing the unjustly prosperous,
fierce for the required,
flexible on the desired,

by the exercise of reason
checking mindless impulse,
pitting force against the violent,
cooperating with the reasonable,
fearless to those who show no fear,
and terrible in time of terror.

As evidence of these qualities
they have captured these enemy spoils,
set here to honour Zeus
and serve as their memorial.

They were no strangers to natural courage,
nor to licit passions,
to conflict in arms
or to honorable peace –

pious in their practise to the gods,
respectful in the care of their parents,
treating citizens as equals
showing favor to their intimates.

We have a deathless yearning
for these dead,
a yearning immortal
in our mortal bodies
for these mortals.

Reading 2.14 (b) Speech concerning the dead, attributed to Gorgias (a literal translation)

(Source: Freeman, K. (1962 [1948]) *Ancilla to the Pre-Socratic Philosophers*, Oxford: Blackwell, p.130)

For what did these men lack that men should have? What did they have that men should not have? Would that I could express what I wish, and may I wish what I ought, avoiding divine wrath, shunning human envy! For the courage these men

possessed was divine, and the mortal part (*alone*) was human. Often, indeed, they preferred mild reasonableness to harsh justice, often also correctness of speech to exactitude of law, holding that the most divine and most generally applicable law was to say or keep silent, do or not do, the necessary thing at the necessary moment. They doubly exercised, above all, as was right, mind and body, the one in counsel, the other in action; helpers of those in undeserved adversity, chastisers of those in undeserved prosperity; bold for the common good, quick to feel for the right cause, checking with the prudence of the mind the imprudence of the body; violent towards the violent, restrained towards the restrained, fearless towards the fearless, terrifying among the terrifying. As evidence of these things, they have set up trophies over the enemy, an honour to Zeus, a dedication of themselves: men not unacquainted with the inborn spirit of the warrior, with love such as the law allows, with rivalry under arms, with peace, friend of the arts; men showing reverence towards the gods by their justice, piety towards their parents by their care, justice towards their fellow-citizens by their fair dealing, respect towards their friends by keeping faith with them. Therefore, although they are dead, the longing for them has not died with them, but immortal though in mortal bodies, it lives for those who live no more.

Reading 2.15 *Menexenus* 234–5, attributed to Plato

(Source: *Menexenus*, 234–5, attributed to Plato; revised L. Hardwick)

234

C SOCRATES Certainly, Menexenus, to be killed in the heat of battle seems to be noble in many ways. For a man gets a fine and magnificent funeral even if he was poor when he died and he wins praise even if he was a miserable fellow, and that praise is given by wise men who do not give it at random but prepare their speeches a long time in advance. These men praise in such a fine way that, when they attribute to each both what he possesses and what he does not, they bewitch our minds, such is the way they embroider most beautifully those of whom they speak.

235

A And they praise the state in every way; they praise those who met their end in the war and all our ancestors from the past and we ourselves who are still alive. And so, Menexenus, I myself when praised by them feel very much ennobled each time I listen. I am riveted and uplifted and persuade myself I have become larger and more aristocratic and more noble.

B And since I usually have foreigners [*xenoi*] with me who are also listening I appear to them to be more majestic. For they seem to feel the same as I do, both with regard to myself and to the rest of our *polis*, holding it to be more admirable than before because they have been persuaded by the speaker.

...

E SOCRATES She has produced many other fine orators including one who outstripped all the Greeks, – Pericles, son of Xanthippus.

MENEXENUS Who is *she*? Clearly you speak of Aspasia.

SOCRATES I do.

Reading 2.16 Gorgias, *Encomium of Helen*, 8, 11 and 13, DK 82 B 11

(Source: Gorgias, *Encomium of Helen*, 8, 11 and 13; trans. C. Emlyn-Jones)

(This is Gorgias' most famous extant work, a display speech or *epideixis* in which he seeks to exonerate Helen of Troy from blame for eloping with Paris, her lover. Note that *psyche* is a Greek word, combining the idea of 'mind' and 'spirit'.)

8 But if speech was the persuader of her *psyche*, it is not hard for me to make a defence against that too, and to dismiss the accusation thus: speech is a mighty ruler. With the smallest and most invisible body it accomplishes the most godlike deeds; for it can put a stop to fear, banish sorrow, create joy and increase pity.

11 How many men have persuaded and do persuade how many on how many subjects by fabricating false speech! For if everybody, on every subject, possessed memory of the past and foreknowledge of the future, speech would not be so powerful; but, as it is, neither remembering the past nor looking into a present event nor foretelling the future is simple, with the result that on most subjects the majority of men allow belief as the adviser of their *psyche*. But belief, being precarious and unreliable, brings, for those who employ it, precarious and unreliable success.

13 To prove that persuasion when entering into speech also moulds the mind as it wishes, you should note, firstly, the speeches of astronomers, who, substituting belief for belief, demolishing one and recommending another, make the unbelievable and unclear apparent to the eyes of belief. Secondly, compelling contests of words, in which a simple speech delights a large mob and persuades them because it is written with skill but not delivered with truth. Thirdly, conflicts of philosophical speeches, in which it is demonstrated that quick-wittedness makes faith in one's beliefs easily changeable. The power of speech bears the same relation to the organisation of the *psyche* as the ordering of drugs bears to the constitution of bodies. For, just as different medicines force different humours from the body, and some prevent illness while others prevent life, so also with words: some speeches sadden, others please, some cause fear, others give confidence to their hearers, but some drug and bewitch the *psyche* with an evil persuasion.

Reading 2.17 Lincoln's address at Gettysburg

(Source: Wills, G. (1992) *Lincoln at Gettysburg: the Words that Remade America*, New York: Simon & Schuster, p.263)

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we can not dedicate – we can not consecrate – we can not hallow – this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us – that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full

measure of devotion – that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain – that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom – and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN November 19, 1863

Reading 2.18 Edward Everett's speech at Gettysburg (beginning)

(Source: Wills, G. (1992) *Lincoln at Gettysburg: the Words that Remade America*, New York: Simon & Schuster, pp.213–16)

1 Standing beneath this serene sky, overlooking these broad fields now reposing from the labors of the waning year, the mighty Alleghenies dimly towering before us, the graves of our brethren beneath our feet, it is with hesitation that I raise my poor voice to break the eloquent silence of God and Nature. But the duty to which you have called me must be performed; – grant me, I pray you, your indulgence and your sympathy.

2 It was appointed by law in Athens, that the obsequies of the citizens who fell in battle should be performed at the public expense, and in the most honorable manner. Their bones were carefully gathered up from the funeral pyre, where their bodies were consumed, and brought home to the city. There, for three days before the interment, they lay in state, beneath tents of honor, to receive the votive offerings of friends and relatives, – flowers, weapons, precious ornaments, painted vases, (wonders of art, which after two thousand years adorn the museums of modern Europe,) – the last tributes of surviving affection. Ten coffins of funeral cypress received the honourable deposit, one for each of the tribes of the city, and an eleventh in memory of the unrecognized, but not therefore unhonored, dead, and of those whose remains could not be recovered. On the fourth day the mournful procession was formed; mothers, wives, sisters, daughters led the way, and to them it was permitted by the simplicity of ancient manners to utter aloud their lamentations for the beloved and the lost; the male relatives and friends of the deceased followed; citizens and strangers closed the train. Thus marshalled, they moved to the place of interment in that famous Ceramicus, the most beautiful suburb of Athens, which had been adorned by Cimon, the son of Miltiades, with walks and fountains and columns, – whose groves were filled with altars, shrines, and temples, – whose gardens were kept forever green by the streams from the neighboring hills, and shaded with the trees sacred to Minerva and coeval with the foundation of the city, – whose circuit enclosed

> the olive Grove of Academe,
> Plato's retirement, where the Attic bird
> Trilled his thick-warbled note the summer long;

whose pathways gleamed with the monuments of the illustrious dead, the work of the most consummate masters that ever gave life to marble. There, beneath the over-arching plane-trees, upon a lofty stage erected for the purpose, it was ordained that a funeral oration should be pronounced by some citizen of Athens, in the presence of the assembled multitude.

3 Such were the tokens of respect required to be paid at Athens to the memory of those who had fallen in the cause of their country. For those alone who fell at Marathon a special honor was reserved. As the battle fought upon that immortal field was distinguished from all others in Grecian history for its influence over the fortunes of Hellas, – as it depended upon the event of that day whether Greece should live, a glory and a light to all coming time, or should expire like the meteor

of a moment; so the honors awarded to its martyr-heroes were such as were bestowed by Athens on no other occasion. They alone of all her sons were entombed upon the spot which they had forever rendered famous. Their names were inscribed upon ten pillars, erected upon the monumental tumulus which covered their ashes, (where after six hundred years, they were read by the traveler Pausanias,) and although the columns beneath the hand of time and barbaric violence, have long since disappeared, the venerable mound still marks the spot where they fought and fell, –

> That battle-field where Persia's victim horde
> First bowed beneath the brunt of Hellas' sword.

4 And shall I, fellow citizens, who, after an interval of twenty-three centuries, a youthful pilgrim from the world unknown to ancient Greece, have wandered over that illustrious plain, ready to put off the shoes from off my feet, as one that stands on holy ground, – who have gazed with respectful emotion on the mound which still protects the dust of those who rolled back the tide of Persian invasion, and rescued the land of popular liberty, of letters, and of arts, from the ruthless foe, – stand unmoved over the graves of our dear brethren, who so lately, on three of those all-important days which decide a nation's history, – days on whose issue it depended whether this august republican Union, founded by some of the wisest statesmen that ever lived, cemented with the blood of some of the purest patriots that ever died, should perish or endure, – rolled back the tide of an invasion, not less unprovoked, not less ruthless, than that which came to plant the dark banner of Asiatic despotism and slavery on the free soil of Greece? Heaven forbid! And could I prove so insensible to every prompting of patriotic duty and affection, not only would you, fellow citizens, gathered, many of you from distant States, who have come to take part in these pious offices of gratitude – you, respected fathers, brethren, matrons, sisters, who surround me – cry out for shame, but the forms of brave and patriotic men who fill these honored graves would heave with indignation beneath the sod.

5 We have assembled, friends, fellow citizens, at the invitation of the Executive of the great central State of Pennsylvania, seconded by the Governors of seventeen other loyal States of the Union, to pay the last tribute of respect to the brave men, who, in the hard fought battles of the first, second and third days of July last, laid down their lives for the country on these hill sides and the plains before us, and whose remains have been gathered into the Cemetery which we consecrate this day. As my eye ranges over the fields whose sods were so lately moistened by the blood of gallant and loyal men, I feel, as never before, how truly it was said of old, that it is sweet and becoming to die for one's country. I feel as never before, how justly, from the dawn of history to the present time, men have paid the homage of their gratitude and admiration to the memory of those who nobly sacrificed their lives, that their fellow men may live in safety and in honor. And if this tribute were ever due, when, to whom, could it be more justly paid than to those whose last resting place we this day commend to the blessing of Heaven and of men?

Reading 2.19 Bertie Ahern's speech on the occasion of the reinterment of the remains of Volunteers executed during the War of Independence

(Source: Ahern, B. (2001) 'Oration at Glasnevin Cemetery, Sunday, 14 October 2001', *Taoiseach's Press Releases and Speeches*, www.taoiseach.gov.ie/index.asp?docID=503. Accessed 5 July 2005. The first paragraph of the speech was delivered in Irish Gaelic and then repeated in English.)

People of Ireland and friends around the world. We are gathered here today in honour of the ten Volunteers who died on the scaffold in Mountjoy Prison in the cause of freedom and the cause of Ireland. We are all here to lay their remains to rest in this soil at last with dignity and honour. We all understand how much we owe these ten young men and all the Volunteers of that period, both men and women. Their sacrifice is not being forgotten by the people of Ireland, and it never will. In the war they fought, they had one support that could not be ignored. That was the mandate for independence from the General Election of 1918. They knew the people were with them. Dáil Éireann was formed from those who were elected, and who were willing or able to attend. When the Declaration of Independence was passed, the Ceann Comhairle of that First Dáil said to the Deputies present that they all understood that war would be the consequence of the Declaration. They understood that. They were satisfied, if necessary, to fight to liberate the country.

The big powers had said that it was for the small nations that the First World War was fought. The people of Ireland were determined that the principle of national self-determination must also be extended to the Irish nation. During that first session, the Democratic Programme, addressing the economic and social needs of Ireland, was also adopted, at the request of the Labour Movement, 'with a view to a general and lasting improvement in the conditions under which the working classes live and labour'. These ten young men were executed during the War of Independence. The country was under tremendous pressure at the time. There was a united effort. Meanwhile, elected by the people, Dáil Éireann was developing, in spite of a war going on. Democracy was being put to work. Independent civic institutions, including the Dáil courts, were beginning to function. Before their deaths, the ten had seen the light of freedom. They understood that Ireland would be free and independent. The ten men were Kevin Barry, a UCD medical student of 18, with roots in County Carlow; Thomas Whelan from Clifden; Patrick Moran from Roscommon; Patrick Doyle, Bernard Ryan, Frank Flood and Thomas Bryan all from Dublin; Thomas Traynor of Tullow; and Edmond Foley and Patrick Maher, from Galbally, County Limerick. It is no wonder to the people of Ireland then that this day has come.

Although we have difficulties of our own time, there is no fair person in this country but thinks that it is good that we bury these men with State honours here today, and indeed that it is time we did so. The Irish State today is discharging a debt of honour that stretches back 80 years. Here in Glasnevin stand the memorials to Irish patriots of the past two centuries, statesmen, soldiers, all those who contributed in many different ways to the onward march of a nation. Nine of the ten Irish volunteers executed in Mountjoy in 1920 and 1921 belong here, in accordance with the wishes of their families. Patrick Maher will be interred next week in County Limerick.

This is a day that has been sought for many years, with the support of successive Governments. All of us wished this to be a unifying occasion, in accordance with the wishes of the families today, who have assented to the re-interment. The men we honour belong to a period, when the entire national movement was united in a tremendous effort to achieve Ireland's independence that

was desired and voted for by a large majority of the people. War, for whatever cause and whatever circumstances, always has cruel consequences. But every nation, both large and small, has a right to defend and vindicate its freedom in accordance with the will of its people. If an Irish national democracy could have been established peacefully, through elections, or by passive resistance, that would have been preferable. But a realistic reading of history shows government determination to prevent that, by force, if necessary.

The ten Volunteers executed in Mountjoy died defending and upholding the independence proclaimed by Dáil Eireann on 21 January 1919. The British Government of the day, who would relinquish control of this part of Ireland in 1922, were seeking in vain to maintain their continued rule by force, long after popular consent had been definitively withdrawn. Erskine Childers, who with Desmond FitzGerald was charged with explaining the Irish case to a wider international audience, stated that Kevin Barry was doing precisely what Englishmen would be doing under the same circumstances and under the same provocation, and that what was involved was 'a national uprising, a collision between two governments, one resting on consent, the other on force'.

The area of Ireland outside of six Ulster counties, having rejected the limited home rule offered by the Government of Ireland Act 1920, was ruled by a crown colony form of government with martial law declared in many places. The situation was not greatly different from that of the thirteen colonies, that went on to form the United States, when they decided to throw off tyranny in 1776. George Washington was a soldier-statesman, and the American War of Independence was one of the principal inspirations of the independence struggle, led by New York-born Eamon de Valera, Cork-born Michael Collins, who had worked for some years in London, and Arthur Griffith, the founder of Sinn Féin.The Irish struggle was a legitimate inspiration to national independence movements in the colonies of the European Empires, and in many cases curtailed the sacrifices for freedom that colonised peoples elsewhere would have to make.

The Indian Congress leader Nehru wrote letters from prison about Ireland's independence struggle to his daughter Indira in the 1930s. Ireland has a right to be proud of its role in the liberation of oppressed peoples around the world, which has given us a continuing empathy with countries struggling to achieve peace and higher development. Before the Truce, the Dáil, and the Government, all members of the Dáil, took formal responsibility as the elected representatives of the people for the actions of the Volunteers, and recognised them as their army. They explicitly acknowledged the democratic legitimacy of the campaign that they had fought, and accepted accountability for it. So those of us who are proud of our national independence should have no reservations about honouring those Volunteers. On the other hand, it would be quite wrong to apply without distinction any such presumption to other times and circumstances, and to a quite different situation, or to stretch the democratic mandate of 1918 far beyond its natural term. Conversely, the memory of the Volunteers of 1920 and 1921 does not deserve to be burdened with responsibility for terrible deeds or the actions of tiny minorities that happened long after their deaths.

People of common sense and goodwill understand all of that perfectly. How the principle of self-determination was to be applied, particularly in local situations where majority and the minority were different from elsewhere in the country, was open to argument. But by 1920 it was accepted everywhere that a locally strong minority could not be allowed to block indefinitely self-government in the rest of Ireland. Not everyone on this island, then or now, sympathised with or supported Ireland's independence as a separate and self-governing country. Minorities within came to accept and give loyalty to the State, and in time a broader pluralistic

culture in place of toleration has developed. The ideals and experiences of Irish-Ireland and of Ulster Unionism were so far apart, as to make mutual comprehension difficult. Irish Nationalism itself took many legitimate forms, including the honourable, constitutional tradition, going back to Daniel O'Connell, which had greatly advanced the cause of self-government. In 1918, Sinn Féin and the Irish Parliamentary, Party Eamon de Valera and John Dillon, stood on the same platforms opposing conscription. The Government of Ireland Act, 1920, was never accepted in the South, but was not a satisfactory settlement for other than the Unionist community even in the area designated as Northern Ireland, where it was implemented. Today, it is gone. Revisiting the problem of relations between North and South and between the islands, and creating a new, just and equitable system of democratic government throughout the island, has been the difficult task that our generation has had to take up, after much trauma.

The Good Friday Agreement has moved us to a new stage in our history, but that certainly does not mean we forget or repudiate those who founded our State. This State has abolished the death penalty, and lives by the rule of law. There is neither need nor excuse for the extra-judicial use of force by anyone today. The same is true of Northern Ireland, and beyond dispute since the Good Friday Agreement. Today's ceremonies relate to the circumstances that led to the foundation of this State, and the sacrifices involved. We have much to be proud of, and the achievement, however incomplete, is considerable.

We all look to a future in which the people of Ireland can conduct warm and friendly relations with each other and with our neighbours in Great Britain on a basis of equality and partnership, in an atmosphere free of force and coercion, and in which people of all traditions can live and cooperate together for the common good.

Reading 2.20 Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*

(Source: Sommerstein, A.H. (trans.) (1998) *Aristophanes: Lysistrata*, Oxford: Oxbow Books, pp. 15–53)

Characters of the play:

Lysistrata
Calonice
Myrrhine *Athenian women*
Lampito *a Spartan woman*
Chorus of Old Men
Chorus of Old Women
Magistrate *one of the ten Probouloi*
First Old Woman
Second Old Woman
Third Old Woman *of the group which has seized the Acropolis*
First Woman
Second Woman
Third Woman
Fourth Woman *of the group which has taken Lysistrata's oath*
Cinesias *of Paeonidae, husband to Myrrhine*
Baby *son to Cinesias and Myrrhine*
Herald *from Sparta*
Spartan Delegate
First Athenian Delegate
Second Athenian Delegate

Silent characters:

Athenian Women
Ismenia *a Theban woman*
A Corinthian Woman
Spartan Women
A Scythian Girl *servant to Lysistrata*
Two slaves *attending the magistrate*
Four Scythian Archers
Old Women *of the group which has seized the Acropolis*
Manes *servant to Cinesias*
Spartan Delegates
Servants *attending the Spartan delegates*
Athenian Delegates
Reconciliation
Doorkeeper

[Lysistrata comes out of one of the flanking doors of the stage-house. She looks off to right and left, but sees no one approaching.]

LYSISTRATA *[annoyed]* Now if someone had invited them to a Bacchic revel, or to Pan's shrine, or to Genetyllis' shrine at Colias – you'd never have been able to get through the crowd, what with the drums! But as it is, there's not a woman turned up here.
[Seeing the far door open] Except that here's my neighbour coming out. 5
[Calonice comes out.] Good morning, Calonice.

CALONICE Same to you, Lysistrata. *[Coming closer]* What's disturbed you so terribly? Don't look cross, child. Knitted brows don't look good on you.

LYSISTRATA My heart's burning, Calonice, and I'm feeling *very* sore 10 about us women: because in men's opinion we're thought to be such utter rascals –

CALONICE And so we are, by Zeus!

LYSISTRATA But when they've been told to meet here to have a discussion about a far from trivial matter, they lie asleep and don't come. 15

CALONICE They'll come, darling. For women to get out of the house is quite some trouble, you know. One of us may be hanging round her husband, another rousing a servant, another putting her baby to bed or bathing it or feeding it with titbits.

LYSISTRATA But the point is, there were other things that should matter 20 more to them than all those!

CALONICE What actually *is* it, Lysistrata dear, that you're calling us women together for? What is this thing? What's the size of it?

LYSISTRATA It's big –

CALONICE You don't mean big *and meaty*?

LYSISTRATA – and meaty too, I tell you.

CALONICE Then how come we're not all here?

LYSISTRATA Not in *that* sense! We'd have assembled fast enough if it 25 was. No, it's something that I've been examining and tossing about through many a sleepless night.

CALONICE Tossing about? Must be a dainty little thing.

LYSISTRATA So very *dainty* that the salvation of all Greece is actually in the hands of her women.

CALONICE In the hands of her women? Then it's resting on very little!

LYSISTRATA I tell you that the fortunes of the country depend on us. Either there will be no more Peloponnesians –

CALONICE Well, that would be splendid, by Zeus, for them to be no more!

LYSISTRATA – and the Boeotians will all be utterly destroyed –

CALONICE Oh, please not *all* of them – do make an exception for the eels!

LYSISTRATA I won't utter any words of that kind about Athens, but you can infer my meaning. But if the wives come together here – those from Boeotia, those of the Peloponnesians, and ourselves – united we'll save Greece.

CALONICE But what can women achieve that is clever or glorious – we who sit at home all dolled up, wearing saffron gowns and cosmetics and Cimberic straight-liners and riverboat slippers?

LYSISTRATA Why, that's exactly what I'm counting on to save Greece – our pretty saffron gowns and our perfumes and our riverboat slippers and our rouge and our see-through shifts.

CALONICE How on earth do you mean?

LYSISTRATA To make it that none of the men living today will take up the spear against each other –

CALONICE In that case, by the Two Goddesses, I'm going to dye a gown with saffron!

LYSISTRATA – or take up a shield –

CALONICE I'm going to put on a Cimberic!

LYSISTRATA – or even a little toy sword.

CALONICE I'm going to buy riverboat slippers!

LYSISTRATA So shouldn't the women be here now?

CALONICE Not *now*, in heaven's name – they should have taken wing and been here long ago!

LYSISTRATA Ah, I tell you, my good friend, you'll see they're thoroughly Athenian – everything they do is too late. Why, there isn't even a single woman here from the Paralia, nor from Salamis.

CALONICE Oh, as for them, they'll have been working over on their pinnaces well before daylight.

LYSISTRATA And the Acharnian women too, whom I was expecting and counting on their being first here, they haven't come.

CALONICE Well, at any rate Theogenes' wife was putting on all sail to come here. *[Pointing offstage]* But look, here you are, some of them are arriving now.

LYSISTRATA *[looking in the other direction]* And here come some others.

CALONICE *[recoiling as if from a foul smell]* Ugh! where are they from?

LYSISTRATA Lousia.

CALONICE Dead right; seems to me we've opened a real *can* of lice!

[During this dialogue women have been coming on from both sides, and a fair-sized group has now gathered. One of them is Myrrhine.]

MYRRHINE We haven't come late, Lysistrata, have we? *[Lysistrata ignores the question.]* What do you say? Why don't you speak?

LYSISTRATA *[severely]* Myrrhine, I don't thank anyone for only arriving now, on a matter of this importance.

MYRRHINE The thing was, I had trouble finding my waistband in the dark. But if it really is vital, speak to those of us who are here.

LYSISTRATA No, no; let's wait – it's only a matter of a few minutes – for the women from Boeotia and the Peloponnese to come.

MYRRHINE Yours is a much better idea. *[Looking off]* And look, here comes Lampito now.

[Enter Lampito, accompanied by a Theban woman (Ismenia) and a Corinthian woman, and followed by several other Spartan women. Their garments, unlike those of the Athenian women, are open at the side in the Doric fashion.]

LYSISTRATA Welcome, Lampito, my very dear Laconian friend! Darling, what beauty you display! What a fine colour, and what a robust frame you've got! You could throttle a bull.

LAMPITO *[in Laconian dialect]* Yes, indeed, I reckon, by the Two Gods; at any rate I do gymnastics and jump heel-to-buttocks.

CALONICE *[feeling Lampito's breasts]* *What* a splendid pair of tits you've got!

LAMPITO *[annoyed]* Really, you're feeling me over like a victim for sacrifice!

LYSISTRATA And where does this other young lady come from *[indicating Ismenia]*?

LAMPITO She's come to you, don't you know, by the Two Gods, as a representative of Boeotia.

MYRRHINE *[looking inside Ismenia's revealing costume]* Yes, she represents Boeotia all right, with that fine lowland region she's got!

CALONICE *And*, by Zeus, with the mint shoots very neatly plucked out!

LYSISTRATA And who's the other girl?

LAMPITO A lady of noble line, by the Two Gods, a Corinthian.

CALONICE Yes, it's certainly obvious she *does* have noble lines – here and here *[pointing to the Corinthian's belly and buttocks]*!

LAMPITO Now who has convened this gathering of women?

LYSISTRATA Here I am; I did.

LAMPITO Tell us, pray, what you wish of us.

CALONCIE Yes, indeed, dear lady, do tell us what this important business of yours is.

LYSISTRATA I will tell you now. But before doing so, I will ask you this one small question.

CALONICE Whatever you like.

LYSISTRATA Don't you miss the fathers of your children badly, when they're away on campaign? I know that every one of you has a man away from home.

CALONICE *My* husband, my dear, anyway, has been off on the Thracian Coast for five months, keeping a watch on Eucrates.

MYRRHINE And *mine's* been seven solid months at Pylos.

LAMPITO And *mine,* even when he does ever come home from his active service, right away he's fastened on his shield-band and gone flying off again.

LYSISTRATA Why, there isn't even a *lover* left us now – not the least glimmer of one. Since the Milesians deserted us, I haven't even seen a six-inch dildo that might have given us some slender comfort. If I were to find a plan, then, would you be willing to join me in bringing the war to an end?

CALONICE By the Two Goddesses, I would, for one, even if I had to pawn this mantle and drink my purse dry all in one day!

MYRRHINE And *I* think I'd even be ready to slice myself in two like a flounder and donate half of my body!

LAMPITO And I would climb right to the top of Mount Taÿgetum, if I was going to be able to see peace from there.

LYSISTRATA I will say it: there's no need for the idea to stay hidden. What we must do, women, if we mean to compel the men to live in peace, is to abstain –

CALONICE From what? Tell us.

LYSISTRATA You'll do it, then?

CALONICE We'll do it, even if we have to give our lives. *[The others indicate enthusiastic agreement.]*

LYSISTRATA Well then: we must abstain from – cock and balls. *[Strong murmurs of dissent; some of the women seem on the point of quitting the meeting.]* Why are you turning your backs on me? Where are you going? I ask you, why are you pursing your lips and tossing your heads? "Why pales your colour, why this flow of tears?" Will you do it or will you not? or why do you hesitate?

CALONICE I won't do it. Let the war carry on.

MYRRHINE By Zeus, nor will I. Let the war carry on.

LYSISTRATA *You* say that, Madam Flounder? Why, a moment ago you were saying you'd be ready to slice off half of your body!

CALONICE Anything else you want – anything! And if need be, I'm willing to walk through fire – rather that than cock and balls! There is nothing, Lysistrata dear, nothing like it!

LYSISTRATA *[turning to another of the women]* And what about you?

WOMAN I'd rather go through fire too!

LYSISTRATA What an absolute race of nymphomaniacs we are, the lot of us! No wonder the tragedies get written round us: we're nothing but Poseidon and a tub. *[To Lampito]* Look, my dear Laconian friend, if you, just you, join with me, we can still save the situation. Do cast your vote on my side.

LAMPITO Well, by the Two Gods, it's a hard thing for women to sleep alone without Big Red. But all the same, yes; we do need peace back again.

LYSISTRATA Oh my darling, you're the only real woman here!

CALONICE But suppose we abstained as much as you like from ... what you said – which heaven forbid – would that make peace any more likely to happen?

LYSISTRATA It very much would, by the Two Goddesses. If we sat there at home in our make-up, and came into their rooms wearing our lawn shifts and nothing else and plucked down below delta-style, and our husbands got all horny and eager for the old spleck-spleck, but we kept away and didn't come to them – they'd make peace fast enough, I know for sure.

LAMPITO Menelaus, certainly, when he somehow caught a glimpse of Helen's two little apples bare, let his sword, I reckon, drop out of his hand.

CALONICE But, my dear girl, what if our husbands just ignore us?

LYSISTRATA In the words of Pherecrates – skin the skinned dog.

CALONICE Those imitation things are just sheer garbage. And what if they take us and drag us into the bedroom by force?

LYSISTRATA You should cling to the door.

CALONICE And if they beat us?

LYSISTRATA You should submit in the grudgingest way – there's no pleasure in it when it's done by force – and you should vex them generally; and have no fear, they'll tire of it very quickly. For no man is ever going to get any gratification unless it suits the woman that he should.

CALONICE Well, if that's what you both think, then we agree. *[The others indicate assent.]*

LAMPITO And *we'll* see to it that *our* menfolk keep the peace with complete honesty and sincerity. But your Athenians – how is one going to persuade that riffraff not to act barmy?

LYSISTRATA Don't you worry, we'll do our part of the persuading all right.

LAMPITO Not while your warships still have feet, and while there's that bottomless store of money in the house of your Goddess.

LYSISTRATA Ah, that's also been thoroughly provided for. We're going to occupy the Acropolis today. The over-age women have instructions to do that: while we get our act together, they're to seize the Acropolis under pretence of making a sacrifice.

LAMPITO That should be absolutely fine – another good idea of yours.

LYSISTRATA Well then, Lampito, why don't we bind ourselves together straight away by an oath, so as to make our resolution unbreakable?

LAMPITO Present us with the oath, then; we are ready to swear.

LYSISTRATA Well said. *[Calling in to the stage-house]* Where's that Scythian girl? *[A slave-girl comes out; she is carrying a large round wine-bowl. She looks around as if bewildered.]* What are you staring

at? Put that shield face-down in front of us here *[the slave lays the bowl on the ground]*, and someone give me the severed pieces.

CALONICE Lysistrata, just what is this oath you're going to make us swear?

LYSISTRATA What is it? The same way they say Aeschylus once made people swear: cutting a beast's throat for the blood to run into a shield.

CALONICE Please, Lysistrata, don't take an oath about peace over any shield.

LYSISTRATA So what oath can we have?

CALONICE Suppose we got a white stallion from somewhere and cut it in pieces as an oath-sacrifice?

LYSISTRATA *[contemptuously]* White stallion indeed!

CALONICE Well, how *shall* we swear?

LYSISTRATA I'll tell you, by Zeus, if you want to know. Let's put a large black cup base-down on the ground, slaughter a jar of Thasian wine, and swear to pour no water in our cup.

LAMPITO Oho, I can't say how much I approve that oath!

LYSISTRATA Someone bring a cup and a jar from inside. *[The Scythian girl takes her shield-bowl away and returns with a cup and jar, both of exceptional size. The women crowd around.]*

MYRRHINE My dear, dear girls, what enormous hardware!

CALONICE *[taking the cup in her hands]* Give anyone pleasure just to pick this up!

LYSISTRATA Put that down *[Calonice does so]* and take hold of the boar, please. *[All the women lay a hand on the jar]* O Lady Persuasion, O Cup of Amity, be thou gracious to womankind and receive this sacrifice. *[She pours wine from the jar into the cup.]*

CALONICE The blood's a good colour and gushes out well.

LAMPITO And it's sweet-smelling, too, by Castor!

MYRRHINE *[trying to push Calonice and Lampito aside]* Let me be the first to swear, ladies!

CALONICE No, you don't, by Aphrodite, not unless you draw the first lot!

LYSISTRATA Lampito, everyone, take hold of the cup. *[All do so.]* Let one of you, on behalf of all, repeat the exact words that I say, and the rest will swear to them afterwards in confirmation. No man whatever, neither lover nor husband –

CALONICE No man whatever, neither lover nor husband –

LYSISTRATA – shall come near me with his cock up. *[Calonice hesitates.]* Say it.

CALONICE – shall come near me with his cock up. *[Swaying as if about to swoon]* Help, help, Lysistrata, my knees are buckling!

LYSISTRATA And I will pass my life at home, pure and chaste –

CALONICE *[recovering]* And I will pass my life at home, pure and chaste –

LYSISTRATA – in make-up and saffron gown –

CALONICE – in make-up and saffron gown –

LYSISTRATA – so that my husband may be greatly inflamed with desire for me –

CALONICE so that my husband may be greatly inflamed with desire for me –

LYSISTRATA – and will never of my free will yield myself to my husband.

CALONICE – and will never of my free will yield myself to my husband.

LYSISTRATA And if he force me by force against my will –

CALONICE And if he force me by force against my will –

LYSISTRATA – I will submit grudgingly and will not thrust back.

CALONICE – I will submit grudgingly and will not thrust back.

LYSISTRATA I will not raise up my Persian slippers ceilingwards.

CALONICE I will not raise my Persian slippers ceilingwards.

LYSISTRATA I will not stand in the lioness-on-a-cheesegrater position.

CALONICE I will not stand in the lioness-on-a-cheesegrater position.

LYSISTRATA If I fulfil all this, may I drink from this cup.

CALONICE If I fulfil all this, may I drink from this cup.

LYSISTRATA But if I transgress it, may the cup be filled with water.

CALONICE But if I transgress it, may the cup be filled with water.

LYSISTRATA *[to the others]* Do all of you join in swearing this oath?

ALL We do.

LYSISTRATA Here, let me consecrate this. *[She is about to drink off the cup.]*

CALONICE *[interposing]* Only your share, my friend; we want to *be* friends with each other, right from the start.

[As Lysistrata is about to drink from the cup and pass it round, a women's cry of joy is heard from backstage.]

LAMPITO What's that shout for?

LYSISTRATA It's the very thing I told you about: the women have now seized the Citadel of the Goddess. So now, Lampito, you go and arrange everything at your end, but leave these others here with us as hostages. *[Exit Lampito.]* And for ourselves, let's go inside and join the other women on the Acropolis in barring the doors.

CALONICE But don't you expect the men to make a united counter-attack on us straight away?

LYSISTRATA They don't bother me. There are no menaces, no fire, that they can bring against us, strong enough to get these gates open, except on the conditions that we have laid down.

CALONICE No, by Aphrodite, never! Otherwise it would be for nothing that we women are called villains whom there's "no getting the better of".

[All go into the Acropolis. Presently the chorus of twelve old men are seen approaching from one of the wing-entrances. Each is carrying two olive-wood logs, a vine-torch, and a pot containing live coals, and their movement is slow and laborious.]

MEN'S LEADER March on, Draces, lead the way, even if you *are* sore in the shoulder with carrying all that weight of green olive-trunk.

MEN Well! how many surprises long life keeps in store!
Who would ever, Strymodorus, have expected to hear
that women – that blatantly evil pest
that we've been rearing in our homes –
are in possession of the holy image
and have seized *my* Acropolis
and moreover are making fast the Propylaea
with bolts and bars?

MEN'S LEADER So let's hurry to the Acropolis as fast as we can,
Philurgus, so we can lay these tree-trunks all round where they are, heap
up a single pyre, and with our own hands consign to the flames all the
women who have instigated and pursued this plan, all of them
condemned together, and Lycon's wife the first of them!

MEN By Demeter, they shan't mock me, not while I live!
Not even Cleomenes, who was the first to seize the place,
went away unscathed; no,
for all the Spartan spirit in his nostrils
he departed surrendering his arms to me,
wearing a tiny short homespun cloak,
hungry, dirty, hair-faced,
unwashed for six years.

MEN'S LEADER That's how savagely I'd besieged that man, staying all
night before the gates in ranks seventeen deep. And shall I not help put a
stop to such audacity as this from these women, enemies of Euripides
and of all the gods? Then may my trophy no longer stand in the Four
Towns!

MEN But now of my journey
there just remains the distance
up the slope to the Acropolis, which I am in haste to reach.
How are we ever going to haul
this lot up without a donkey? –
because *my* shoulder's fairly crushed by this pair of logs.
But all the same I must march on,
and give my fire some air,
in case it goes out when I'm not looking, right at the end of my
journey.

[They blow on the coals, which flare up, sending smoke into their faces.]

Ow, ow, the smoke!

Lord Heracles! how violently
it leaped on me from the pot!
It stings my eyes like the bite of a rabid bitch!
And, what's more, this fire
is thoroughly vicious,
else it wouldn't have sunk its teeth like that into these bleary eyes of mine.
Forward, hurry, to the Acropolis,
on to the aid of our Goddess!
Or when *shall* we come to her defence, Laches, if not now?

[They blow on the coals, as before, with the same result.]

Ow, ow, the smoke!

MEN'S LEADER This fire's woken up, the gods be praised, and it's well alive. Couldn't we, then, if we first put the logs down here, then lowered the vine-torch into the pot, set it alight, and then charged the door like a battering-ram – and if when we summon the women to surrender they don't undo the bars, we must set fire to the doors and overcome them with the smoke. *[The men indicate their assent to this plan.]* Right, let's put down our load. *[They bend down to unburden themselves of the logs, only to get the smoke from the pots in their faces again.]* Ugh, the smoke! Whew! *[As they continue to struggle with the logs]* Can any of the generals at Samos lend a hand with this wood? *[The leader succeeds in disentangling himself from the logs and laying them on the ground.]* Well, *they've* stopped crushing my spine now. So now, pot, it's up to you to rouse your coals into flame, so that they can provide me first of all with a lighted torch. O Lady Victory, be thou with us, and may we set up a trophy over the women in the Acropolis and this present effrontery of theirs.

[The men gather round the piled logs and, crouched over their pots, endeavour to get their torches lit. While they are thus engaged the second semichorus enter, composed of twelve old women, carrying pitchers of water on their heads, and advancing much more nimbly than the men had done.]

WOMEN'S LEADER I think I can see smoke and shimmer, women, as if a fire was burning. We must hurry really fast.

WOMEN Fly, fly, Nicodice,
before Calyce and Critylla
are engulfed in flames blown up all around them
by terrible winds
and by pestilent old men.
But I am afraid of one thing: could I be behindhand in coming to their aid?
For only now, after filling my pitcher in the dark
from the fountain, hampered by the crowd and hubbub and knocking of pots,
jostling with slave-girls
and tattoo-birds, have I eagerly
hoisted it up and come
bringing water to the aid
of my women fellow-citizens attacked with fire.

For I have heard that some gormless old men
are coming, curse them, carrying logs
to the Acropolis, a couple of hundredweight or so,
as if to heat the public baths,
and uttering the most fearful threats –
that "we've got to burn these loathsome women to charcoal".
May I never, goddess, see these women being burnt up,
but rather see them rescue Greece and their fellow-citizens from
war and madness –
the purpose for which they have occupied thy sanctuary,
O Golden-crested Guardian of the City:
and I call on thee to be our ally,
O Lady of the Lake, and if any man
sets it on fire,
to be with us bringing water.

[By now the men have at last succeeded in lighting their torches and are preparing to make their assault on the doors.]

WOMEN'S LEADER *[to her colleagues]* Rest, ho! – What might this be? Wicked, wicked men, that's what! No men of any piety or decency would ever have been doing this.

MEN'S LEADER *[as the men find their way is blocked]* Here comes a thing we never expected to see: here's another swarm of women *out*side, coming to help the first lot!

WOMEN'S LEADER Why so deadly scared of us? You don't mean to say we seem a great multitude? And yet you haven't seen the ten-thousandth part of us so far!

MEN'S LEADER Phaedrias, are we going to let these women jabber so much? Shouldn't someone have broken our timber on their backs by now?

WOMENS'S LEADER Let us too put down our pitchers on the ground, so that it won't get in our way if anyone lays a hand on us. *[They do so.]*

MEN'S LEADER By Zeus, if someone had given them a sock in the jaw two or three times, like Bupalus got, they wouldn't have a voice to speak now!

WOMEN'S LEADER *[presenting her cheek to be struck]* All right, here you are; someone hit it; I'll stand still and take it – and then no *other* bitch will ever seize your bollocks again!

MEN'S LEADER If you're not going to keep quiet, I'll beat you clean out of that old skin of yours!

WOMEN'S LEADER You just come near Stratyllis and touch her with one finger –

MEN'S LEADER And what if I bash you with two fists, what's this fearful thing you're going to do?

WOMEN'S LEADER I'll tear out your lungs and your guts with my teeth!

MEN'S LEADER *[backing off; to his colleagues]* There isn't a wiser poet than Euripides: as he says, there's no creature so shameless as women are.

WOMEN'S LEADER Rhodippe, let us take up our pitchers of water. *[They do so.]*

MEN'S LEADER Why have you come here with water, you god-detested scum?

WOMEN'S LEADER Well, why have *you* come with fire, you old sepulchre? To set yourself alight?

MEN'S LEADER *I've* come to heap up a pyre and light it under your friends.

WOMEN'S LEADER And *I've* come to quench your pyre with this.

MEN'S LEADER You're going to quench my fire, are you?

WOMEN'S LEADER You'll learn for certain soon enough!

MEN'S LEADER I'm wondering if I should give you a grilling right away with this torch.

WOMEN'S LEADER I'll give you a *bath*, if you happen to have some soap.

MEN'S LEADER *You* give *me* a bath, you decayed old thing?

WOMEN'S LEADER And a wedding bath at that.

MEN'S LEADER *[to a colleague]* Did you hear her cheek?

WOMEN'S LEADER *[indignantly]* I'm a free woman, I am!

MEN'S LEADER I'll stop that loud mouth of yours!

WOMEN'S LEADER You're not sitting on a jury now, you know.

MEN'S LEADER *[to a colleague; brandishing his torch]* Set her hair on fire!

WOMEN'S LEADER Over to you, Achelous! *[The women fling their water over the men.]*

MEN'S LEADER Help, help!

WOMEN'S LEADER *[with pretended solicitude, as the men are given a second wetting]* I hope it wasn't too hot?

MEN'S LEADER Hot indeed! Stop it, will you? What do you think you're doing?

WOMEN'S LEADER I'm watering you, so you'll sprout well. *[By now the pitchers have been emptied]*

MEN'S LEADER But I've already shivered myself dry!

WOMEN'S LEADER Well, you've got fire, so why not warm yourself by it?

[Enter an elderly Magistrate, accompanied by two slaves carrying crowbars and four Scythian archer-policemen.]

MAGISTRATE So it's flared up again – women's licentiousness and their drum-beating and their incessant cries of "Sabazius", and those Adonis rites on the roofs. I heard them once when I was in the Assembly. Demostratus, curse him, was saying we should sail to Sicily, and this woman was dancing and she goes "Alas for Adonis!" Then Demostratus said to enrol some hoplites from Zacynthus, and meanwhile she'd had a bit to drink, this woman on the roof, and she goes "Bewail Adonis!" But he just bashed on regardless, that loathsome, god-detested Brainsickite. That's the sort of unbridled excesses you get from them.

MEN'S LEADER What would you say if you heard about the outrageous behavour of *this* lot? They've displayed every kind of wanton insolence, and now they've given us a bath out of those pitchers, so that we can shake water out of our cloaks as though we'd peed in them!

MAGISTRATE By Poseidon the Briny, it's what we deserve. It's when we ourselves *assist* our wives in their wickedness and *teach* them to be licentious, that they spawn schemes of this kind. Like the way we go into the craftsmen's shops and say things like this: "Goldsmith, that necklace you mended – last night my wife was dancing, and the pin's slipped out of the hole. Now I've got to cross over to Salamis; so if you're free, could you without fail come over in the evening and fit a pin in her hole, please?" Another man talks like this to a strapping young shoemaker with a cock that's certainly no chicken: "Shoemaker, it's my wife's foot – the strap is hurting her little piggy-wiggy, because it's tender; so could you come over in the middle of the day and loosen it up so as to make it wider?" That's the sort of thing that's led to things like this, when now I, a Commissioner, having secured a supply of timber for oars and now requiring the money to pay for them, am shut out by the women from entering the gates. But there's no point in standing around. *[To the two slaves]* Bring up the crowbars, so I can put a stop to their insolence. *[The slaves do not at once respond.]* Why are you gawping like that, you wretched fool? And you, what are you gazing at

away there? Seeing if you can see a wine-shop, I've no doubt! Get those crowbars under the gates, can't you, and lever them out of their sockets from that side, and I'll help you by levering from this side.

[Before the slaves can obey, the door opens and Lysistrata comes out.]

LYSISTRATA Don't do any levering; I'm coming out of my own free will. What's the need of crowbars? It's not crowbars that are needed, rather it's brains and sense.

MAGISTRATE How dare you, you villainous woman! Where's an archer? [One of the Scythian archers comes forward.] Seize her and tie her hands behind her back.

LYSISTRATA Then, by Artemis, I tell you, if he touches me with the tip of his finger, I'll make him howl, public servant though he is! *[The archer hesitates.]*

MAGISTRATE Frightened, are you? *[Beckoning to a second archer]* Seize her by the waist, will you, together with him, and both be quick and tie her up!

[Before the archers can obey, a ferocious-looking old woman comes out of the Acropolis.]

FIRST OLD WOMAN Then, by Pandrosus, I tell you, if you so much as lay a hand on her, you'll get such a pasting you'll shit all over the place!
[The archers stand paralysed.]

MAGISTRATE Shit indeed! Where's another archer? *[A third archer comes forward.]* Tie up this one first, because she can't even hold her tongue.

[At this moment a second old woman comes out.]

SECOND OLD WOMAN Then, by the Bringer of Light, I tell you, if you touch her with the tip of your finger, you'll soon be begging for a cupping-vessel! *[The archers again stand paralysed.]*

MAGISTRATE What *is* this? Where's an archer? *[The fourth and last archer comes forward.]* Lay hold on her. I'll put a stop some time to these sorties of yours!

[A third old woman comes out.]

THIRD OLD WOMAN Then, by Tauropolos, I tell you, if you come near her, I'll tear out your groananwailing hair! *[The archers again stand paralysed.]*

MAGISTRATE Heaven help me, I've run out of archers! But we must never let ourselves be beaten by women. Fall into line, Scythians, and let's charge them. *[The archers regroup themselves in line, facing the women.]*

LYSISTRATA Then, by the Two Goddesses, you'll learn that we on our side have four whole companies of fully armed fighting women inside there!

MAGISTRATE Twist their arms behind them, Scythians.

LYSISTRATA *[calling into the Acropolis as the archers advance]* Women of the reserve, come out of there, at the double! Come on, you brood of the porridge and vegetable market! Come on, you garlic-landlady-breadsellers! *[A squad of tough old women, in hoplite armour, come running out of the Acropolis. They divide into four groups and, aided by the women already on stage, set upon the four archers.]* Go on, drag

them down, hit them, thump them, revile them, be shameless! *[The archers are put to flight.]* Stop – withdraw – no stripping the bodies. *[The "women of the reserve" retire into the Acropolis.]*

MAGISTRATE My god, what a disaster for my archer corps!

LYSISTRATA Why, what did you expect? Did you think you were coming to fight some sort of slave-girls? Or don't you suppose women have any spirit in them?

MAGISTRATE Plenty of it, by Apollo – *if* there's a wine-shop nearby.

MEN'S LEADER Commissioner of this state, you have wasted a lot of words. Why do you involve yourself in dialogue with these animals? Don't you know what kind of bath these women have just given us – in our poor old cloaks, and without soap at that?

WOMEN'S LEADER Well, my good man, you ought not to raise a hand against your neighbours without reason. If you do, you're bound to end up with a black eye. Because all I want is to sit virtuously at home like a young girl, annoying no one here, not disturbing so much as a twig – but if people provoke me and rifle my nest, I'm a real wasp!

MEN O Zeus, what on earth shall we do with these monsters?
For this is no longer endurable; rather you must examine
this event together with me
and discover what on earth was their aim
in occupying Cranaus' Hold, and for what purpose
they have seized the great rock of the forbidden Acropolis,
the sacred precinct.

MEN'S LEADER Now question her, don't let her persuade you, bring every kind of scrutiny to bear; because it's disgraceful to just let something like this go untested.

MAGISTRATE Well then, this is the first thing, by Zeus, that I'm concerned to learn from them – *[to Lysistrata]* what was your object in shutting and barring our Acropolis?

LYSISTRATA So we could keep the money safe and thereby prevent you from making war.

MAGISTRATE Do you say it's because of the money that we're at war?

LYSISTRATA Yes, *and* that's why there was all the other agitation. It was in order that Peisander, and all those who were eager to hold office, might have something there to steal, that they were always stirring up some brouhaha or other. Well, if that's their aim let them do what they will: they've no more chance now of getting hold of the money here.

MAGISTRATE But what are you going to do?

LYSISTRATA You ask me that? We'll manage it for you.

MAGISTRATE *You'll* manage the money?

LYSISTRATA Why do you think that so strange? Don't we manage the household finances for you already?

MAGISTRATE But it's not the same thing.

LYSISTRATA Why's it not the same thing?

MAGISTRATE This money needs to be used for the war.

LYSISTRATA But you shouldn't be making war at all in the first place.

MAGISTRATE How else can we keep ourselves safe?

LYSISTRATA *We'll* see you safe.

MAGISTRATE *You?*

LYSISTRATA Yes, us.

MAGISTRATE The audacity!

LYSISTRATA I assure you, you're going to be saved, even if you don't want to be.

MAGISTRATE An outrageous assertion!

LYSISTRATA Are you annoyed? It still has to be done.

MAGISTRATE By Demeter, you've no right to!

LYSISTRATA You must be saved, my dear sir.

MAGISTRATE Even if I don't ask to be?

LYSISTRATA All the more *because* you don't!

MAGISTRATE And what caused *you* to concern yourselves with war and peace?

LYSISTRATA We'll tell you.

MAGISTRATE [*fidgeting*] Then do, and fast, unless you want a hiding.

LYSISTRATA Then listen – and try and keep your hands under control.

MAGISTRATE I can't; I'm so angry, it's too hard for me to keep them still.

FIRST OLD WOMAN If you don't, you'll get a much bigger hiding!

MAGISTRATE May the curse you croak, old woman, fall upon *you*! *[To Lysistrata]* Now please speak.

LYSISTRATA I will. For a long time previously, thanks to our self-control, we endured <in silence> whatever you men did, because you wouldn't let us utter a sound; but we certainly weren't satisfied with you! No, we were well aware of your doings, and often at home we'd hear how you'd made a bad decision on some great issue; and then, grieving inwardly, we'd put on a smile and ask you: "In the Assembly today, what did you decide to inscribe on the stone as a footnote to the peace treaty?" To which my husband would say "What's that to *you?* Be quiet, won't you?" And keep quiet I did.

FIRST OLD WOMAN *I* would never have kept quiet!

MAGISTRATE *[to Lysistrata]* You'd have got a belting all right if you *hadn't* kept quiet!

LYSISTRATA That's why at that time I for one did keep quiet. Later on we'd come to know of some other even worse decision of yours, and then we'd ask, "Husband, why are you carrying through this policy in such a stupid way?" And at once he'd give me an angry look and tell me to spin my thread or else he'd see I had a headache for weeks: "war is for men to take care of."

MAGISTRATE And he was right to say so, by Zeus.

LYSISTRATA What do you mean, "right", you wretched fool, when we weren't allowed to give you any advice even when your policy was wrong? But when the time came when we were hearing you say openly in the streets "There isn't a man in the country" – "No, by Zeus, there

isn't," says another — after that we women straight away decided to band together and unite to save Greece. What *were* we supposed to wait for? So if you'll be prepared to listen in your turn to our good advice, and if you'll keep quiet in your turn as we had to, we can put you back on the right path.

MAGISTRATE *You* put *us* on the right path? An outrageous claim, and one I won't stand for!

LYSISTRATA Be quiet!

MAGISTRATE *I* am to be quiet for *you,* you damned woman, and that when you wear a veil about your head? Then may I not live!

LYSISTRATA Well, if you find that a stumbling-block, take this veil from me, have it, put it around *your* head *[she takes off her veil and puts it on the Magistrate's head]* – and *then* be quiet!

FIRST OLD WOMAN *[handing him her work-basket.]* And take this basket too.

LYSISTRATA And then hitch up your robe and start carding wool, chewing beans as you work; and let war be for *women* to take care of!

WOMEN'S LEADER Move off away from the pitchers, women, so that we too in our turn may give some assistance to our friends.

WOMEN For never will I tire of dancing,
nor will my knees be mastered by toil and the weariness it brings.
I am ready to go to any lengths
together with these women, because of their valour; for
they have character, they have charm, they have daring,
they have wisdom, and they have an intelligent
patriotic valour.

WOMEN'S LEADER Now, most courageous of all mummies and all nettly grannies – advance in fury, and do not soften, for you've still got the wind behind you.

LYSISTRATA Well, so long as sweet-souled Eros and Cyprus-born Aphrodite breathe desire over our bosoms and our thighs, and so engender in our menfolk a delightful rigidity and attacks of truncheonism, I believe that one day we will be known among the Greeks as the Dissolvers of Strife.

MAGISTRATE What will you have done to be called that?

LYSISTRATA If in the first place we can stop people doing their shopping in armour, and lunatic behaviour like that.

FIRST OLD WOMAN Hear, hear, by Paphian Aphrodite!

LYSISTRATA At the moment there they are – among the potters, among the greengrocers, you name it – walking round the Agora in armour as if they were Corybantes!

MAGISTRATE Yes, indeed, that's what brave men *should* do.

LYSISTRATA But it really is a ridiculous spectacle, when a man with a shield and a Gorgon on it goes and buys ravenfish!

FIRST OLD WOMAN I for one, by Zeus, once saw a long-haired chap, a cavalry officer, on horseback, buying porridge from an old woman and bunging it in his brass hat. Then there was another, a Thracian,

brandishing his little shield and his javelin like old Tereus, and he terrified the woman on the fig stall and gulped down her ripe figs.

MAGISTRATE So how are you going to be able to put an end to the great confusion of affairs in the various countries and to unravel it?

LYSISTRATA Very easily.

MAGISTRATE Demonstrate how.

[Lysistrata takes the work-basket which the Magistrate has been holding, and uses its contents to illustrate her ensuing exposition.]

LYSISTRATA It's like when we have a tangled skein of wool. We take it, like this, and pull it gently with the help of our spindles, now this way and now that. That's how we'll unravel this war, if we're allowed to, sorting it out by sending embassies, now this way and now that.

MAGISTRATE You think you can solve serious problems by methods of wool and skeins and spindles? What stupid fools!

LYSISTRATA We do, and what is more, if *you* had any sense, you would handle all your affairs in the way we handle wool.

MAGISTRATE How so, tell me?

LYSISTRATA First of all, just like washing out a raw fleece, you should wash the sheep-dung out of the body politic in a bath, then put it on a bed, beat out the villains with a stick and pick off the burrs; and as for those people who combine and mat themselves together to gain office, you should card them out and pluck off the heads. Then card the wool into the work-basket of union and concord, mixing in everyone; and the immigrants, and any foreigner who's friendly to you, and anyone who's in debt to the treasury, they should be mixed in as well. And yes, there are also all the states which are colonies of this land: you should recognize how you now have them lying around like little flocks of wool, each one by itself; so then you should take the human flock from all of them, bring them together here and join them into one, and then make a great ball of wool, and from that weave a warm cloak for the people to wear.

MAGISTRATE It really is disgraceful that these women should go on like this about sticks and balls, when they've had absolutely no part in the war!

LYSISTRATA What do you mean, damn your eyes? We bear its burden more than twice over: in the first place by bearing sons and sending them out as hoplites –

MAGISTRATE Quiet, don't open old wounds.

LYSISTRATA Then, at the age when we ought to be having pleasure and enjoying the bloom of our prime, we have to sleep alone because of the campaigns. About our own position I will say no more, but I am deeply distressed about the spinsters growing old in their maiden chambers.

MAGISTRATE What, don't men grow old too?

LYSISTRATA Now, really, you're not talking about the same thing. A man comes home, and even if he's grey-haired, he's soon the husband of a young girl. But for a woman the time of opportunity is fleeting, and if she fails to seize it, no one wants to marry *her*, and she's left sitting at home clutching at any straw of an omen.

MAGISTRATE But any man who can still make himself stand up straight –

LYSISTRATA *[interrupting him]* And what do *you* think you're doing not dropping dead? There's a burial-plot ready; you can buy a coffin; I'll knead a honey-cake right away. *[Taking a garland of flowers from her head and giving it to him]* Take these and have a wreath.

FIRST OLD WOMAN *[giving him ribbons]* And take these from me.

SECOND OLD WOMAN *[putting her tiara on his head]* And take this tiara as well.

LYSISTRATA *[mockingly]* What do you need now? What are you missing? Off you go to the boat! Charon is calling you, and you're holding up the sailing.

MAGISTRATE Well, really, is it not disgraceful that *I* should be treated like this? By Zeus, I'm going to go straight to the Commissioners and show myself to them just as I am! *[Exit with his slaves.]*

LYSISTRATA *[calling after him]* You're not complaining, are you, that we haven't given you a full laying-out? Don't worry: the day after tomorrow for sure, very early in the morning, the third-day offerings, properly prepared, will be coming to you from us! *[She and her three companions go into the Acropolis. The logs, fire-pots, pitchers, etc., are removed from the orchestra, which is now occupied by the two choruses.]*

MEN'S LEADER No free man has any business now to be asleep; come, men, let's strip for this action! *[The men remove their outer garments.]*

MEN For this already seems to me
to smell of more and bigger things,
and I catch a strong whiff of the dictatorship of Hippias.
And I very much fear that some men from Laconia
may have congregated here at Cleisthenes' house
and be stirring up these god-detested women by underhand means
to seize our money and the daily pay
by which I lived!

MEN'S LEADER It's disgraceful, I tell you, that these women should lecture the citizenry and talk, females that they are, about brazen shields, and on top of that try to make peace between us and men of Laconia who can no more be trusted than can a ravening wolf! No, men, this plot they have woven against us is to set up a dictatorship. But they shall never be dictators over *me:* henceforth I shall be on my guard and "carry my sword in a branch of myrtle", and do my shopping in armour close beside Aristogeiton, and take my stand next to him, like this *[striking an attitude, right leg thrust forward, right arm raised as if swinging back a sword]* – and so be ideally placed to give this god-detested old woman a sock in the jaw! *[He brandishes his fist at the women's leader.]*

WOMEN'S LEADER If you do, your mother won't know you when you come back home! Now, old girls, let us first leave these on the ground. *[The women remove their outer garments.]*

WOMEN Here we begin, all you citizens, to deliver
advice that will benefit the city;
and rightly so, for she nurtured me in sumptuous splendour.
As soon as I was seven years old, I was an Arrephoros;
then I was a Grinder; when I was ten, at the Brauronia,

I shed my saffron gown as one of the Foundress's Bears;
and I was also once a basket-bearer, a beautiful girl, wearing
a string of dried figs.

WOMEN'S LEADER So you see I owe it to the city to give her some good advice. And if I was born a woman, don't be indignant with me on that account if I make some suggestions that are better than the situation we've got. I have a stake in the common wealth: I contribute *men* to it. You wretched old men have *no* stake; you've squandered the fund that came to you from your grandfathers, from the war with the Medes, and now you don't pay your property-taxes in return – indeed we're positively in danger of liquidation thanks to you. Can you say a word to that? If you annoy me at all, I'll give you one in the jaw with this boot – and it's raw hide! *[She raises her leg as if to kick the men's leader.]*

MEN Now are not these doings utterly
outrageous? And I think they will grow to be even more so.
This is something that must be resisted by every man with any
balls!

MEN'S LEADER Let us take off our tunics; a man ought to smell like a man right from the start, he shouldn't be swathed up like a rissole. *[The men remove their tunics.]*

MEN Now come on, you Whitefeet,
we who went against Leipsydrium
when we still were something,
now, now we must become young again and revitalize
our whole body and shake off this old skin of ours.

MEN'S LEADER If any of us lets these women get even the least purchase on us, there's no work to which they'll fail to set their assiduous hands. They'll even build warships, and try as well to attack us with them and ram us, like Artemisia. And if they turn to horsemanship, you can forget about our cavalry; there's nothing so *equestrian* as a woman or so good a mounter, and even at a gallop she won't slip off. Look at the Amazons whom Micon painted, on horseback, fighting against men. What we ought to do with these women is grab 'em all by that neck of theirs and fit it through a hole in a wooden board! *[He makes as if to seize the women's leader.]*

WOMEN By the Two Goddesses, if you kindle my flame,
Then *I* shall unleash the wild sow within me, and this day
I'll shear your fleece so, you'll be screaming for help!

WOMEN'S LEADER Women, let us also quickly undress, so that we may smell like women, women in a biting rage! *[The women remove their inner garments.]*

WOMEN *[defiantly]*
Now let anyone have a go at me, if he wants
never again to eat garlic
or black beans;
because if you so much as say an insulting word to me, my
anger boils so high
I'll midwife you as the beetle did the breeding eagle!

WOMEN'S LEADER I'm not going to worry about you lot, while there lives my Lampito and my Theban friend the noble girl Ismenia; for you'll have no power, no, not if you pass your motions seven times over –

hated as you've made yourself, you wretch, by everybody and especially our neighbours. Why, only yesterday, when I was having a party for the girls in honour of Hecate, I invited my chum from next door – a fine girl and one I was fond of, an eel from Boeotia; but they said they wouldn't let her come, because of *your* decrees. And you just will not stop making these decrees – not until someone takes you by the leg and hauls you off to have your neck broken! *[She makes as if to seize the men's leader by the leg.]*

[Lysistrata comes out of the Acropolis. She paces anxiously about.]

WOMEN'S LEADER

O sovereign of this action and this scheme,
Pray, why cross-visaged com'st thou from thy halls?

LYSISTRATA

'Tis worthless women's deeds and female hearts
That make me walk despondent to and fro.

WOMEN'S LEADER What say'st thou? What say'st thou?

LYSISTRATA 'Tis true, 'tis true.

WOMEN'S LEADER

What is 't that troubles thee? Speak to thy friends.

LYSISTRATA

'Tis shame to say, yet grievous to conceal.

WOMEN'S LEADER

Then do not hide from me the ill we suffer.

LYSISTRATA

In brief the tale to tell – we need a fuck.

WOMEN Ah, Zeus!

LYSISTRATA

Wherefore cry out on Zeus?

– But anyhow, that's the way it is. In fact I'm no longer capable of keeping them away from the men; they're absconding this way and that. The first one I caught was opening up the hole round where Pan's Grotto is; another again was wriggling down on a pulley-cable and trying to defect that way; another one yesterday I pulled down by her hair when she was just meaning to fly down on the back of a sparrow to Orsilochus's place. And they're trotting out all sorts of excuses to go off home. *[A woman emerges from the Acropolis, moving rapidly and furtively.]*
Look, here comes one of them now. Hey, you, where are you running off to?

FIRST WOMAN I want to go home. I've got some Milesian fleeces there, and the moths must be *devouring* them.

LYSISTRATA What do you mean, moths? Come back, will you?

FIRST WOMAN But, by the Two Goddesses, I'll come right back after just spreading them on the bed.

LYSISTRATA Don't you spread anything, and don't you go off anywhere.

FIRST WOMAN What, and leave my wool to be ruined?

LYSISTRATA If need be. *[The woman reluctantly returns to Lysistrata. Almost at once another woman runs out of the Acropolis.]*

SECOND WOMAN Oh dear me, oh dear me, my best flax! I left it at home unpeeled!

LYSISTRATA Here's another, coming out to go to her unpeeled flax. *[To Second Woman]* Come back here.

SECOND WOMAN But, by the Bringer of Light, I'll just strip it bare and come back up straight away.

LYSISTRATA No, no, no stripping bare! If you start on that, some other woman will want to do the same too. *[Second Woman returns to Lysistrata. A third woman runs out of the Acropolis, clasping her bulging belly.]*

THIRD WOMAN O Lady Hileithya, keep the baby back till I've got to a non-holy place!

LYSISTRATA What are you blethering about?

THIRD WOMAN I'm going to give birth any minute!

LYSISTRATA But you weren't pregnant yesterday.

THIRD WOMAN But I am today! Send me home to the midwife, Lysistrata, right away!

LYSISTRATA What's this tale you're telling? *[Feeling the woman's belly]* What's this hard thing you've got there?

THIRD WOMAN The baby's a boy.

LYSISTRATA [tapping with her knuckles] By Aphrodite, no – it's quite plain that all you're *carrying* is something hollow and made of metal! I'm going to find out. *[She lifts up the woman's garment to reveal a large bronze helmet.]* You ridiculous ass – holding the sacred helmet, and saying you were pregnant!

THIRD WOMAN But, by Zeus, I *am* pregnant.

LYSISTRATA So what were you doing with that helmet?

THIRD WOMAN It was so that if the birth came upon me when I was still on the Acropolis, I could go inside the helmet and have the baby there like a pigeon.

LYSISTRATA What are you talking about? Just excuses! The truth is plain as can be. You can stay right here until the helmet has its hearth ceremony.

THIRD WOMAN But I can't even sleep on the Acropolis, since that time I saw the guardian serpent. *[As she is saying this, a fourth woman comes out of the Acropolis, followed by several others.]*

FOURTH WOMAN And me, poor thing, I'm dying of insomnia, what with the owls and their eternal honking!

LYSISTRATA My dear ladies, do stop these fantastic tales. Maybe you do long for your husbands; but do you suppose they don't long for you? They're having *dreadful* nights, I'm quite certain. Be patient, my good friends, and endure this hardship for just a little time more; for we have an oracle that says we shall be victorious if we do not fall out among ourselves. And this *[producing a scroll from the folds of her dress]* is the oracle.

THIRD WOMAN Tell us what it says.

LYSISTRATA Keep quiet, then. *[Reads]*
"But when the swallows take refuge together in one place
fleeing the hoopoes' pursuit, and keep themselves far from phallicity,
there will be an end of troubles, and Zeus who thunders from above
will cause what is higher to be lower –"

THIRD WOMAN You mean *we'll* be lying on top in future?

LYSISTRATA
"But if the swallows become disunited and fly up on wings
out of the sacred temple, it will thenceforth be thought
that there is no bird whatever that's such an utter
nymphomaniac."

THIRD WOMAN Ye gods, that's certainly a plain enough oracle!

LYSISTRATA Then let us not flag or fail amid privations, but let us go
inside. It will truly be a disgrace, dearest comrades, if we betray the
oracle. *[All go into the Acropolis.]*

MEN I want to tell you a story, one that I heard myself
once when I was a boy.
Once upon a time there was a young man called Melanion, who
fled from marriage until he came to the wilderness
and lived in the mountains;
and he had a dog,
and so he wove himself nets
and hunted hares,
and never came back
home again, because of his loathing.
So much did he abhor
women, and we sensible fellows
do so no less than Melanion did!

MEN'S LEADER *[advancing towards Women's Leader]*
I want to kiss you, old woman –

WOMEN'S LEADER *[shying away]*
Then you won't be eating onion any more!

MEN'S LEADER
– and raise a leg and kick you! *[He kicks a leg in the air.]*

WOMEN'S LEADER *[pointing and laughing]*
That's a thick bush you've got!

MEN'S LEADER
Well, Myronides too
was shaggy down there, and all
his enemies found him pretty *hairy-arsed*;
and so too was Phormio.

WOMEN I want to tell you a story too
in reply to your Melanion.
There was a wanderer named Timon, whose countenance
was hemmed round with impassable briers,
a scion of the Furies.
Well, this Timon
departed, because of his loathing,
<to a desert place,>
calling down many curses

upon wicked men.
So much did he on his side hate
you wicked men, always;
but towards women he was most friendly.

WOMEN'S LEADER *[advancing towards Men's Leader]*
Would you like a sock in the jaw?

MEN'S LEADER *[shying away in mock terror]*
No, no! I'm so *frightened!*

WOMEN'S LEADER
Shall I give you one with my leg, then?

MEN'S LEADER
You'll be showing your man-bag!

WOMEN'S LEADER
Even so, old woman though I am,
you wouldn't see it
all hairy, but singed clean
with the lamp.

[During the ensuing scene both choruses withdraw to the edge of the orchestra (see note on 907), the women taking with them both their own discarded clothes and also those of the men.]

[Lysistrata appears on the ramparts (i.e. on the roof of the stage-house), and looks off to right and left. Suddenly she sees something in the distance that makes her cry out in delight.]

LYSISTRATA Hurray! Women, come here to me, quickly!

[Several women join her, among them Calonice and Myrrhine.]

CALONICE What's the matter? Tell me, what were you calling for?

LYSISTRATA *[pointing off]* A man! I see a man coming this way, half
crazed and possessed by the secret rites of Aphrodite! O Lady, mistress
of Cyprus and Cythera and Paphos, go on up the long straight road that
thou hast begun to tread!

CALONICE Where is this man, whoever he is?

LYSISTRATA By the shrine of Chloe.

CALONICE Oh, yes, by Zeus, so he is. And *who* might he be?

LYSISTRATA Try and see. Does any of you recognize him?

MYRRHINE Yes, by Zeus, I do – and it's Cinesias, my husband!

LYSISTRATA It's up to you now to roast him and torment him and
beguile him and love him and not love him, and grant him everything
except – you and our cup know what.

MYRRHINE Don't worry, I'll do that.

LYSISTRATA And I, what's more, will stay here and help you beguile
him and grill him. Now everyone go away.

[All go inside except Lysistrata. Enter, left, Cinesias. Like all the male characters in this second half of the play, he wears a large, erect phallus. He is followed by a male slave who carries a baby.]

CINESIAS *[to himself]* Oh, this suffering! The cramps and spasms that
seize me – it's like being tortured on the wheel!

LYSISTRATA *[from the ramparts]* Who is that standing within the perimeter?

CINESIAS It's me.

LYSISTRATA A man?

CINESIAS *[pointing to his phallus]* Yes, a man!

LYSISTRATA Well, get off out of here, won't you?

CINESIAS And who are you to send me packing?

LYSISTRATA I'm daytime sentry.

CINESIAS Then, in the name of the gods, call Myrrhine out here to me.

LYSISTRATA Aha, I'm to call Myrrhine to you, am I? And who are you?

CINESIAS I'm her husband, Cinesias, from Bangwell.

LYSISTRATA *[effusively]* Oh, *welcome*, darling! Among us yours is a name not without repute or renown. Your wife always has you on her lips; and if she's having an egg or an apple, she says *[putting an imaginary piece of food to her lips as she speaks]* "Let this be for Cinesias!"

CINESIAS Oh, in the gods' name –

LYSISTRATA Yes, by Aphrodite! And if a conversation gets started about men, your wife says straight away that all the rest are rubbish compared with Cinesias.

CINESIAS Come on then, call her here.

LYSISTRATA *[after a pause]* Well? Are you going to give me something?

CINESIAS *[indicating his phallus]* I will by all means, if that's what you want. *[Lysistrata is unmoved.]* Well, I've got this; so I give you what I've got. *[He throws her up a purse.]*

LYSISTRATA All right, let me go down and call her for you. *[She leaves the ramparts.]*

CINESIAS *[calling after her]* Quickly, please, quickly! – Because I've had no joy in life since she left my home. It grieves me when I enter the house; I feel the whole place is empty; I get no pleasure from the food I eat – because I'm always horny!

[Myrrhine appears on the ramparts, speaking back to Lysistrata within.]

MYRRHINE I love him, I love him, but he doesn't *want* me to love him. Don't call me out to him.

CINESIAS *[calling up to her]* Sweetheart, Myrrhine baby, why are you acting like this? Come down here to me.

MYRRHINE I tell you I'm *not* going down there.

CINESIAS Won't you come down when I call you, Myrrhine?

MYRRHINE You may be calling me, but you don't really *want* me at all.

CINESIAS Me not want you? I'm absolutely *dying* for you!

MYRRHINE I'm going. *[She turns to go inside.]*

CINESIAS No, no! At least listen to your child! *[He takes the baby from the slave, and holds it up to see its mother.]* Here, call your mummy, go on!

BABY *[stretching out its arms]* Mummy, mummy, mummy!

CINESIAS *[to Myrrhine]* Here, what's wrong with you? Don't you even pity your child, who hasn't had a bath or a suck for six days now?

MYRRHINE I certainly do pity him; but he's got a *father* who couldn't care less about him.

CINESIAS My dear woman, come down to your child.

MYRRHINE The power of the maternal bond! I must come down. What else can I do? *[She leaves the ramparts. Cinesias returns the baby to the slave.]*

CINESIAS <How true it is that absence makes the heart grow fonder!> She seems to my eyes to have grown a lot younger and to have a tenderer look in her eye. And as for her haughtiness and petulance towards me, why, it's just that that overwhelms me with desire!

[Myrrhine comes out of the Acropolis at ground level. Ignoring Cinesias, she goes straight to the baby and takes it in her arms.]

MYRRHINE My sweetie of a little baby that's got such a *naughty* father – come on, let me kiss you, mummy's sweetheart! *[She kisses and cuddles the child.]*

CINESIAS Why are you doing this, you poor misguided thing, listening to these other women, making me feel sore *and* getting hurt yourself? *[He attempts to caress her.]*

MYRRHINE *[brushing him off]* Don't you try and lay hands on me!

CINESIAS And damaging your property and mine at home?

MYRRHINE I'm not concerned about that.

CINESIAS You're not concerned about your wool being pulled to pieces by the hens?

MYRRHINE Absolutely not.

CINESIAS And all this time you haven't celebrated the secret rites of Aphrodite. Won't you come back?

MYRRHINE By Zeus, no, I won't, unless you men reach a settlement and stop the war.

CINESIAS Very well then, if that's what's decided, that's just what we'll do.

MYRRHINE Very well then, *if* that's what's decided, I on my side will go back home. As it is, I've sworn not to.

CINESIAS Well, at least will you lie down with me, after this long time?

MYRRHINE No, I won't. Mind you, I'm not going to say I don't love you.

CINESIAS You love me? Then why not lie down, Myrrie babe?

MYRRHINE What, you ridiculous man, in front of the little one?

CINESIAS No, no. Manes, take this kid home. *[The baby is returned to the slave, who departs carrying it.]* There you are, look, you've got the baby out of the way. Won't you lie down?

MYRRHINE But, my dear, where *could* one do that?

CINESIAS Where? Pan's Grotto is fine.

MYRRHINE And how could I go back up to the Acropolis? I wouldn't be pure any more.

CINESIAS Wash yourself in the Clepsydra, of course; that's an excellent way.

MYRRHINE You mean, my dear, that I should break the oath that I've sworn?

CINESIAS Let that be on my head; don't you worry about any oath.

MYRRHINE All right then, let me fetch us a bed.

CINESIAS Not a bit of it. On the ground will do for us.

MYRRHINE By Apollo, no, in spite of the sort of man you are, I won't let you lie on the ground! *[She goes off into a wing of the stage-house, which represents Pan's Grotto.]*

CINESIAS *[to himself]* The woman loves me, you know, it's pretty obvious!

MYRRHINE *[returning with a portable bed, which she puts down before the grotto entrance]* Here, hurry up and lie down, while I undress. *[Cinesias lies down on the bed. Myrrhine begins to unpin her clothes, but almost at once checks herself]* No, look – um, ah – a mattress, I've got to bring out a mattress!

CINESIAS What do you mean, a mattress? *I* don't need one.

MYRRHINE Oh, yes, by Artemis! On the *cords* isn't at all nice.

CINESIAS *[rising]* Well then, give us a kiss.

MYRRHINE *[doing so]* There. *[She goes into the grotto.]*

CINESIAS Wowee! *[Calling after her]* Come back really quickly now!

MYRRHINE *[returning with mattress, which she lays on the bed]* Here's your mattress. Lie down, and now I *am* undressing. *[Cinesias lies down again. Myrrhine unpins herself at the shoulders, and then breaks off again.]* No, look – um, ah – a pillow, you haven't got a pillow.

CINESIAS But *I* don't *want* one.

MYRRHINE But *I do*! *[She goes into the grotto.]*

CINESIAS *[calling after her]* Do you think this prick of mine's Heracles, serving it this slow?

MYRRHINE *[returning with pillow]* Up you get – jump up. *[Cinesias rises; she puts the pillow in place; he lies down again. Speaking half to herself]* Have I got everything now?

CINESIAS Yes, everything. Come here now, my precious.

MYRRHINE I'm undoing my breastband now. Now remember, don't double-cross me over that business of the settlement.

CINESIAS By Zeus, may I be struck dead if I do!

MYRRHINE *[abruptly]* You haven't got a blanket

CINESIAS I don't *want* one, by Zeus – I want a fuck!

MYRRHINE Don't worry, you'll have one. I'll be back in a moment. *[She goes into the grotto.]*

CINESIAS *[to himself]* This woman will be the death of me with her bedclothes!

MYRRHINE *[returning with blanket]* Raise yourself up.

CINESIAS [standing up while Myrrhine spreads the blanket on the bed] *This [pointing to his phallus]* is raised up already! *[He lies down again.]*

MYRRHINE Do you want me to put scent on you?

CINESIAS By Apollo, I do not.

MYRRHINE By Aphrodite, I will, whether you like it or not! *[She goes into the grotto.]*

CINESIAS Lord Zeus, please let the perfume be spilt!

MYRRHINE *[returning with scent bottle]* All right, put out your hand and take some and rub it on.

CINESIAS *[sniffing the scent in his hand]* This scent isn't a nice one, by Apollo. It's positively dilatory, and it doesn't smell conjugal at all.

MYRRHINE *[in pretended dismay]* Oh dear me, I brought the Rhodian scent!

CINESIAS It's all right. Let it be, my dear woman.

MYRRHINE You do go on talking nonsense! *[She goes back into the grotto.]*

CINESIAS Blast and curse the man who first thought of boiling perfume!

MYRRHINE *[returning with another scent bottle, slender and cylindrical in shape.]* Here, take this thingy.

CINESIAS *[pointing to his phallus]* I've got one already! Now lie down, you wretched woman, and don't bring me anything.

MYRRHINE I'll do that, by Artemis. I'm just taking off my shoes. But do make sure, darling, that you vote for making peace.

CINESIAS I'll think about it. *[He stretches out his arm to draw Myrrhine towards him. It clasps empty air, and, turning his head, he sees her vanishing into the Acropolis, having noiselessly run away from him. He leaps to his feet.]* The woman's done for me and murdered me, in every possible way, and in particular by skinning my cock and scooting!

[During Cinesias' ensuing recitative the two choruses come back into the middle of the orchestra; the women have by now put on their own clothes again, but are still carrying the men's tunics. At the same time the bed is unobtrusively removed.]

CINESIAS

Alas, what shall I do? Whom shall I screw,
cheated of the fairest of them all?
How shall I satisfy *[pointing to his phallus]* this infant's needs?
Where's Mr. Fox-dog?
Rent me a nursemaid, please!

MEN'S LEADER

Truly 'tis a terrible pain, O unhappy one,
wherewith thy soul is tormented because of this deception;
and I do pity thee, alack!
For what kidney could withstand it,
what soul, what bollocks,
what loins, what crotch
could stand being at high tension
and never having a pre-dawn fuck?

CINESIAS *[in agony]*

Oh, Zeus! these terrible cramps!

MEN'S LEADER

And *this* is what she's done to you now,
this utterly loathsome, disgusting woman!

WOMEN'S LEADER
No, this utterly sweet darling of a woman!

MEN'S LEADER
What do you mean, sweet? She's a villain, a villain!

CINESIAS
Yes, a villain, a villain! Oh, Zeus, Zeus,
I wish you would strike her, as if she were a heap of corn,
with a great whirlwind and hurricane,
sweep her aloft, roll her up,
carry her off, and then let go of her,
so she would fall back down again to earth
and then all of a sudden
land a-straddle of my peeled prick!

[Enter a Spartan herald. There is a curious bulge under the lower part of his cloak.]

HERALD *[to Cinesias]* Where is the Senate of Athens, or the Presidium?
I wish to give them some news.

CINESIAS And what are you? A human being, or a phallic demon?

HERALD I am a herald, young man, by the Two Gods, come from Sparta to arrange for a settlement.

CINESIAS *[pointing accusingly to the bulge]* Is that why you've come here with a spear hidden in your clothes?

HERALD *[turning away and trying to conceal it]* I haven't, by Zeus, I haven't.

CINESIAS What are you turning away for? And why are you holding your cloak out in front of you? Got swellings in the groin from your journey, have you?

HERALD *[indignantly turning to face him]* The man's mad, by Castor!
[He angrily raises a hand within his cloak – and in so doing accidentally reveals his erect phallus.]

CINESIAS Why, you lying villain, you're at full cock!

HERALD I'm not, by Zeus, I'm not; don't talk such nonsense.

CINESIAS Then what's this you've got here?

HERALD A Spartan walking-stick.

CINESIAS Oh, yes, if *this [pointing to his own phallus]* is what you call a Spartan walking-stick. You can treat me as one who knows about it, and tell me the truth. How are things with you in Sparta?

HERALD All Sparta has risen up as one man, and all our allies are standing absolutely firm. There is great eagerness for a thrust up-country.

CINESIAS Who caused this affliction to fall upon you? Was it Pan?

HERALD No, it was Lampito, I reckon, who began it, and then the other women in Sparta, all at once as if a starting-gate had fallen, barred the men from their pork-barrels.

CINESIAS So how are you doing?

HERALD Struggling. We go about the city stooped over, like men carrying lamps. The women aren't letting us so much as touch their little berries, until we all with one accord make peace with the rest of Greece.

CINESIAS This thing is a conspiracy – now at last I understand – by all the women everywhere! Now, as quickly as you can, tell your people to send delegates here with full powers to make a settlement; and I'll present this prick of mine to the Council and tell them to choose another set of delegates from Athens.

HERALD I shall fly. What you say is absolutely excellent. *[He goes off by the way he came; Cinesias leaves the scene at the other side.]*

MEN'S LEADER No beast, nor yet fire, is harder to get the better of than a woman is, nor is any leopard so ruthless.

WOMEN'S LEADER So you understand *that,* and yet you're still at war with me, when it's open to you, you silly fool, to have me as your firm friend?

MEN'S LEADER I tell you I shall never give over hating women.

WOMEN'S LEADER Well, any time you like. For now, anyway, I'm not going to let you stand all naked like that. Just look what a ridiculous sight you are! I'm going to come to you and dress you in your tunic. *[She does so, and the other women follow her example.]*

MEN'S LEADER It was certainly not bad of you to have done that. In fact, it was bad of me to have been so angry as to take it off before.

WOMEN'S LEADER For one thing you look like a man now, and for another you don't look absurd. *[Examining his eye]* And if you weren't so hurtful towards me, I'd already have taken that creature that's in your eye and got it out; it's still there now.

MEN'S LEADER Oh, *that's* what was murdering me! *[Taking a ring from his finger]* Look, here's a ring; scoop it out, and then show it to me when you've got it free; because I can tell you it's been biting me in the eye for quite a time.

WOMEN'S LEADER All right, I will – though you really are a bad-tempered man, you know. *[She explores his eye carefully with the ring.]* Zeus above, what a great big monster of a gnat I see you've got in here! *[She extracts the insect and shows it to him.]* Just look at this – a real mighty Tricorythus gnat, isn't it?

MEN'S LEADER You've certainly done me a real service. It had been digging wells in my eye for ever so long, so that now it's been taken out my tears are flowing like anything.

WOMEN'S LEADER Then I'll wipe them away – *[as she does so]* though you are very naughty, you know – and kiss you.

MEN'S LEADER No, don't kiss me!

WOMEN'S LEADER Whether you like it or whether you don't! *[She kisses him, and the other women likewise each kiss one of the old men.]*

MEN'S LEADER Be damned to you! You're such born cajolers, and that old saying is well and rightly said – "neither with the deadly pests nor without the deadly pests"! But I now make peace with you, and for the future I will not do you any more harm nor will you do me any. Now let us unite, closing our ranks, and begin our song. *[The two choruses combine into one, which henceforward sings and dances as a single entity.]*

CHORUS

We are not preparing, gentlemen,

to say anything slanderous at all
about any of our fellow-citizens,
but, quite the contrary,
to say and do nothing
but good; for you've quite enough troubles
on your plates already.
So let every man and woman notify us,
whoever needs to have a spot
of money, two or three minas, because it's in our homes
and we've got purses for it.
And if ever peace makes its appearance,
anyone who takes out a loan from us now
will no longer have to repay it – if he's had it!
We're going to be entertaining
some visitors from Carystus,
fine upstanding men;
and there's a special pea-soup, and
I had a young porker, and
I've sacrificed it, so it's getting
to be lovely tender meat.
So come to my place today; you must have your bath
and come early, yourselves
and your children, and then walk in
without asking leave of anyone –
just march boldly
straight ahead, as if into your own home, because
the door will be – shut.

[Enter a party of Spartan delegates, with the now familiar bulge in their clothes. They are attended by slaves, who remain in the background.]

CHORUS-LEADER But look, here come delegates from Sparta, trailing long beards and wearing a sort of pig-pen round their thighs. – Gentlemen of Laconia, first of all my greetings, and secondly please tell us how we find you faring.

FIRST SPARTAN DELEGATE What need is there to say many words to you? You can *see* how you find us faring. *[The delegates drop their cloaks, revealing their erect phalli.]*

CHORUS-LEADER Whew! This crisis has *hardened* terribly – it seems to have got inflamed worse than ever!

SPARTAN It's beyond words. What *can* one say? Just at all costs let someone come and make peace for us, in any way he likes.

[A party of Athenian delegates are seen approaching from the other direction.]

CHORUS-LEADER And look, I see these indigenous gentlemen too are in the attitude of wrestling men, holding their cloaks clear of their stomachs. It makes it seem like they've got a sort of arth...letic affliction.

FIRST ATHENIAN DELEGATE *[to Chorus]* Can anyone tell us where Lysistrata is? Because here we men are, and we're – as you see. *[They drop their cloaks, and are seen to be in the same condition as the Spartans.]*

CHORUS-LEADER *[aside]* This malady too is in agreement with the other one here. *[To the Athenians]* Do you get seized with cramp in the early hours?

FIRST ATHENIAN More than that, we're absolutely done for with being in this state. In fact, if someone doesn't reconcile us soon, there's no doubt about it, we shall be fucking Cleisthenes!

CHORUS-LEADER If you're wise, you'll pick up your cloaks, to make sure you're not seen by any of the Hermclipper family.

FIRST ATHENIAN By Zeus, you're quite right. *[The Athenians pick up their cloaks and put them back on.]*

SPARTAN Yes, absolutely, by the Two Gods. Come on, let's put on our mantles. *[The Spartans redon their cloaks.]*

FIRST ATHENIAN *[now, for the first time, aware of the Spartans' presence]* Good day to you, Laconians! We *have* had a nasty time.

SPARTAN My gracious sir, we've been having a *dangerous* time, if those men saw us worked up.

FIRST ATHENIAN Well, come on, Laconians, let's have straight talking. What are you here for?

SPARTAN As delegates for a settlement.

FIRST ATHENIAN That's very good; we're the same too. So why don't we summon Lysistrata, who's the only person that can make a settlement between us?

SPARTAN Yes, by the Two Gods – and summon Lysistrat*us* too if you like!

[The portal of the Acropolis is seen to open, and Lysistrata appears.]

FIRST ATHENIAN Well, it seems we've no need to summon her; she heard us, and here she is coming out in person.

CHORUS-LEADER

Hail, bravest of all women! Now you must show yourself
formidable <and gentle>, noble and down-to-earth, haughty and
    tender, a woman of the world;
because the leaders of the Greeks, captivated by your magic,
have come together and jointly submitted all their disputes to your arbitration.

LYSISTRATA Well, it's not a difficult job, if you catch them when they're eager for it and aren't trying to take advantage of one another. I'll soon know. Where's Reconciliation? *[A beautiful, naked young woman comes out of the Acropolis.]* Take the Laconians first and bring them to me; and don't do it with harsh or overbearing hand, nor in the stupid way that our menfolk used to do it, but in a homely, intimate way as you'd expect of a woman – if he doesn't give you his hand, lead him by the tool. *[The head of the Spartan delegation, who had been hesitating whether to offer his hand to Reconciliation, now does so, and she leads him and his colleagues to stand on one side of Lysistrata.]* Now you go and bring those Athenians as well; take hold of any part they offer, and bring them here. *[The Athenian delegates are similarly brought to stand at Lysistrata's other side.]* Laconians, you stand close beside me, and *[to the Athenians]* you too on this side, and hear what I have to say. I am a woman, but I have got a mind: I am not badly off for intelligence on my own account, and I am not badly educated either, having heard a great deal of the talk of my father and of other older men. And now I have got you here, I mean to cast well-deserved reproaches on you both alike. You who at Olympia, at the Gates, at Pytho – how many others could I

mention if there was need to extend the list? – purify the altars, like members of one family, with a single sprinkling of lustral water, are now engaged, though enemies are at hand with their barbarian hosts, in destroying Greek men and Greek cities. At this point concludes one part of my argument.

FIRST ATHENIAN *[aside, his eyes on Reconciliation]* And my skinned cock is killing me!

LYSISTRATA Next, Laconians – for I will now turn to you – do you not remember when Pericleidas the Laconian came here once and sat at the altars supplicating the Athenians, deathly pale in his scarlet cloak, begging for an army? You were hard pressed then by Messene, and also at the same time by the god and his earthquake; and Cimon went with four thousand hoplites and saved all Lacedaemon. That is how the Athenians have treated you: do you ravage a country at whose hands you have received benefits?

FIRST ATHENIAN By Zeus, Lysistrata, they're in the wrong.

SPARTAN *[aside, absent-mindedly]* We're in the wrong. But that bum is unspeakably beautiful!

LYSISTRATA You think I'm going to let you Athenians off, do you? Do you not remember how the Laconians, contrariwise, when you were all wearing slaves' smocks, came in arms and killed many men of Thessaly and many comrades and allies of Hippias? On that day they alone helped you to expel him; they liberated you, and instead of the slave's smock they cloathed your people in a warm cloak once again.

SPARTAN I've never seen a nobler woman.

FIRST ATHENIAN *[aside]* And *I've* never seen a prettier pussy.

LYSISTRATA So after so many good services done in the past, why are you fighting, instead of stopping this wickedness? Why haven't you come to terms? Come on, what's standing in the way?

[During the ensuing dialogue the negotiators map out their respective demands on Reconciliation's person.]

SPARTAN We for our part are willing, if they're prepared to give us back this Rotunda.

LYSISTRATA *What* Rotunda, my man?

SPARTAN Pylos, which we've been longing for and probing around for a long time.

FIRST ATHENIAN By Poseidon, that you *shan't* get!

LYSISTRATA My good sir, let them have it.

FIRST ATHENIAN But then who will we be able to stir up?

LYSISTRATA Well, ask for another place in return for that one.

FIRST ATHENIAN Well then – um, ah – you first of all hand over to us this Hedgehog location here, and the Malian inlet behind it, and the Legs of Megara.

SPARTAN By the Two Gods, my good man, we're not giving all that!

LYSISTRATA Let it be – don't go quarrelling about a pair of legs. *[The Spartan indicates assent.]*

FIRST ATHENIAN I want to strip off now and get down to some husbandry.

SPARTAN And I want to get among the muck good and early, by the Two Gods.

LYSISTRATA You can do that when you've made the peace. First consider among yourselves whether you're in favour of doing so, and go and discuss it with your allies.

FIRST ATHENIAN What do you mean, *allies*, woman? We're too hard up for that! Can't you see our allies will be in favour of the same policy as us two – a fucking policy, the whole lot of them?

SPARTAN Certainly *ours* will, at any rate.

FIRST ATHENIAN And the Carystians will too, by Zeus they will!

LYSISTRATA Excellent! Then for now please make sure you maintain purity, so that we women can entertain you on the Acropolis out of what we brought in our handboxes. While you're there you can exchange oaths and pledges, and then each of you will take his own wife and go away.

FIRST ATHENIAN Well, let's get on with it right away.

SPARTAN *[to Lysistrata]* Lead on wherever you wish.

FIRST ATHENIAN Yes, by Zeus, as fast as you can.

[Lysistrata, accompanied by Reconciliation, leads both delegations into the Acropolis. The Spartans' slaves remain outside; some sit down on the steps.]

CHORUS

Embroidered caparisons,
dress clothes, stately robes,
gold ornaments – all of these that I own
I do not grudge
to make available for all to take
for their sons, or whenever
someone has a daughter being basket-bearer.
I bid you all take your pick right now
of my things in the house, and tell you
nothing is so well sealed up that one won't
be able to break open the sealings
and carry off whatever's inside.
Only, on looking inside, one won't see anything, unless
any of you has sharper eyesight than I have!

If any of you is short of corn
and has servants to feed
and lots of little children,
you can have from me
wheat – fine little grains, but
a quart of them makes a loaf
that's really strapping to look at.
So let any poor man who wishes come
to my place with sacks and
bags, because he'll get wheat; my Manes
will pour it in for them.
Only I give notice

that you're not to approach my door:
beware of the dog!

FIRST ATHENIAN *[within]* Open the door, you! *[The door begins to open; immediately the speaker barges past the doorkeeper, knocking him over.]* You should have got out of the way! *[He is joined by some of his delegation. All are wearing garlands, carrying torches, and evidently drunk. He sees the Spartans' slaves, but does not realize who they are.]* What are you lot sitting there for? You don't want me to burn you up with my torch, do you? *[The slaves retreat from the door.]* Vulgar routine, that, though. I'm not going to do it. *[Some protests from the audience.]* Well, if it's absolutely necessary to do it, we'll suffer that bit more to do you a favour!

SECOND ATHENIAN DELEGATE *[coming out, with others, to join him]* And we'll be with you and share your sufferings. *[They brandish their torches at the slaves, who are still hovering near the door.]* Go away, will you? or else you'll wail and shriek for that hair of yours!

FIRST ATHENIAN Go away, will you, so that the Laconians can come out and leave in peace after their feast. *[They drive the slaves away.]*

SECOND ATHENIAN I've never seen a party like it. The Spartans really were so charming! And we, in our cups, made very clever partyers indeed.

FIRST ATHENIAN Naturally, seeing that when we're sober we go out of our minds. If the Athenians take my advice, in future we'll always go everywhere on embassies drunk. At the moment, when we go to Sparta sober, we at once start looking for ways to muddy the waters. The result is that we don't hear what they say, and suspect them of meaning things which they don't say, and bring home different reports of the same exchanges. But *this* time everything pleased us; so that if, say, someone sang "Telamon" when he should have been singing "Cleitagora", we'd acclaim him and even swear blind that – *[The slaves are seen returning.]* But look, here come these people right back here again. Get lost, will you, you whipping-posts! *[The slaves are again driven off.]*

SECOND ATHENIAN By Zeus, yes; they're coming out from in there right now.

[The Spartan delegates come out of the Acropolis. Their leader carries a pair of bagpipes.]

SPARTAN *[to the stage piper]* Here, my gracious sir, take the puffers, so that I can dance a two-step and sing a fine song in honour of both the Athenians and ourselves also.

FIRST ATHENIAN Yes, I beg you, do take the pipes. *[To the Spartan]* I do enjoy watching you people dance.

SPARTAN *[singing and dancing to the accompaniment of the piper]*
To this young man,
O Memory, send thy daughter
the Muse, who knows about us and about the Athenians,
that time when at Artemisium
they assaulted those ships,
fighting like gods, and vanquished the Medes;
while we were led by Leonidas,
whetting our teeth, I ween,
like wild boars, and much foam

ran out around our cheeks,
and much also poured down our legs.
For the men were as many
as the sands on the shore, were the Persians.
Lady of the Wild, slayer of beasts,
come hither, virgin goddess,
to join in our treaty,
that thou mayest keep us long united; and now
may our pact be blessed
with everlasting friendship and prosperity, and may we
be rid of all wily foxes.
O come hither, O come hither,
thou Virgin Huntress.

[Lysistrata comes out, leading all the Athenian and Spartan wives.]

LYSISTRATA Well now, since the rest of the business has been well and truly accomplished, you can take these ladies away with you, Laconians, and *[to the Athenians]* you can take these. Let man stand beside wife and wife beside man, and then in celebration of these happy events let us dance in honour of the gods, and for the future take care never to make the same mistake again!

[During her ensuing song the wives rejoin their husbands, and the couples move into formation for the dance that is to follow; they occupy the centre of the orchestra, while the chorus – also paired off in couples – are grouped at the edges.]

Set on the dance, bid the Graces join it,
and summon Artemis,
and summon her twin, the kindly Healer,
and summon the god of Nysa, whose eyes blaze
in bacchic ecstasy among his maenads,
and Zeus flaming with fire, and summon
the blessed Lady his consort;
and also those gods whom we will make
unforgetting witnesses
in the matter of great-hearted Tranquillity,
which the goddess Cypris has created.

CHORUS *[dancing]*

Alalai! Hail Paean!
Raise it high, iai,
in the dance of victory, iai!
Evoi, evoi! Evai, evai!

LYSISTRATA Now, Spartan sir, present us with a new song to follow a new song.

SPARTAN *[singing as the couples dance]*

Quit lovely Taÿgetum a second time
and come, Laconian Muse, and in a manner that befits us
celebrate the god of Amyclae
and Athena of the Bronze House
and the noble sons of Tyndareos
who sport beside the Eurotas.
Step it, hey!
prance lightly, hey!
that we may hymn Sparta,

which delights in dances in honour of the gods
and in the stamp of feet,
and where beside the Eurotas
the maidens prance
like fillies, raising clouds
of dust with their feet,
and their hair bobs
like the hair of bacchants who sport and ply the thyrsus;
and they are led by Leda's daughter,
the pure and comely chief of their chorus.

[To the chorus]

But come, make your hand into a band for your hair, and let
your feet leap
like a hind, and clap your hands as well to help the dance along,
and sing in praise of the all-vanquishing goddess, the Lady of
the Bronze House.

[All depart, dancing, the chorus singing a hymn to Athena.]

Commentary

These notes have been abridged from Sommerstein's commentary on the *Lysistrata* for use in this course. As is typical in a commentary on an ancient text, the notes contain numerous references to other ancient sources. Please note that you are ***not*** expected to follow these references up. The ancient sources referred to are mainly the other plays by Aristophanes, Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War* and the scholia (singular: scholium), namely the remarks made by ancient commentators ('scholiasts') on Aristophanes' plays.

1 For the time being the stage-house (*skēnē*) represents the houses of Lysistrata and Calonice. Later this identification will fade out, and between 240 and 253 the back-scene will be reidentified as the west front of the Acropolis, with the central door representing its gateway, the Propylaea.

1–3 In accordance with a stereotype image of women's tastes, which reappears in the ramblings of the Magistrate (387–398), it is assumed that the only kind of meeting which women will be eager to attend is one for private religious worship of a noisy and orgiastic character.

1 **a Bacchic revel**: Greek *bakkheion* can mean either (i) a society (whether of men or of women or both) organized for the worship of Dionysus or (ii) such a society's place of meeting.

2 **Pan's shrine**: Pan had strong associations with music and dancing, especially with the *sȳrinx* or 'pan-pipes'; at Thebes, and no doubt elsewhere too, he and the 'Great Mother' Cybele were worshipped by young women with all-night celebrations of song and dance. See also on 721.

2 **or to Genetyllis' shrine at Colias**: the manuscripts have 'or to Colias or to Genetyllis' shrine', but the only well-known Attic sanctuary of the goddesses of procreation known as the Genetyllides *was* at the headland of Colias near Phalerum. This sanctuary appears to have been a favourite resort of well-to-do Athenian women. The Genetyllides had associations with erotic matters, and there may well be an implication here that this is what makes their worship particularly attractive to women.

3 **drums**: or 'tambourines', Greek *tympana.* These were used both in maenadic worship of Dionysus and in various cults of Asiatic origin such as those of Sabazius (cf. 388) and of the 'Great Mother' with whom Pan had connections (see on 2).

6 **Calonice** is a name of Boeotian rather than Attic formation: it is found on a Theban gravestone roughly contemporary with our play and there are several later Boeotian instances of the corresponding man's name Calonicus.

7–8 We need not suppose that Lysistrata's mask bore an angry look, but it may well have had a distinctly serious, unsmiling expression (cf. 707).

7 **child**: everywhere else in comedy the use of this form of address (Greek *teknon*) requires the addressee to be considerably younger than the speaker; hence Calonice should be thought of as middle-aged (but not so old as to make her participation in the sex-strike seem grotesque; the old women have been assigned a different role in the conspiracy, cf. 177–9).

8 **knitted**: lit. 'made like a bow', i.e. arched in a frown.

12 **such utter rascals**: the context suggests that the reference is especially to women's alleged readiness to seize any excuse to desert their domestic duties: now, contrariwise, when there is a real and important reason for them to leave their homes, they are not doing so.

16 **For women ... quite some trouble**: Calonice means 'it is *difficult for* women to get out of the house', but the Greek can at least as naturally be taken to mean 'it is *dangerous when* women get out of the house'.

17 **hanging round**: or 'stooping over'. A sexual *double entendre* is possible, but the primary meaning is that the wife is at the husband's beck and call to see to numerous minor domestic jobs for him, especially in the early morning before the husband goes out to his daily business.

23–24 **big and meaty**: Lysistrata means 'very important'; but Calonice has understood *prāgma* 'thing' in the sense of 'penis'.

32 **the country**: the Greek word is *polis,* normally 'city (state)', but here, as the context shows, denoting Greece as a whole.

36 **do make an exception for the eels**: the eels of Lake Copais in Boeotia were a much-prized delicacy.

37–38 **I won't utter any words of that kind about Athens**: Lysistrata is unwilling (and so is the author) to speak even hypothetically of the destruction of Athens, lest the words prove an omen.

41 **united**: Greek *koinēi*, a key-word of the play, applied to the solidarity of the women (here and 525) and later to the ending of conflicts between women and men (1042) and between Athenians and Spartans (1111, 1129).

41 **we'll save Greece**: the future indicative presents success as a certainty; Lysistrata is not interested in the possibility of failure.

43 **all dolled up**: this refers to feminine adornment in general, particular adornments being then specified in the following lines.

44 **wearing saffron gowns**: the yellow-dyed *krokōtos* was regarded as 'a women's most attractive and dressy costume' and was particularly associated with festivals and celebrations.

45 **Cimberic straight-liners**: evidently identical with the 'see-through shifts' of 48. They were called 'straight-liners' (*orthostadia*) because they were unbelted and hung straight down from shoulders to feet.

45 **riverboat slippers**: presumably a kind of footwear that was broad and flat like the barges (*bārides*) that plied on the river Nile.

49 **How on earth do you mean?**: Lysistrata's reply – in effect 'by ending the war' – evades for the present any explanation of the *means* by which clothes and cosmetics can bring about this highly desirable result.

49–50 **the men living today**: Aristophanes seldom dares to hope that inter-Hellenic peace may be truly permanent (though cf. 1266–7): the hero of *Peace* (1108) – an old man – prays that peace may 'remain with us all our lives long', while in *Acharnians* (194ff) and *Knights* (1388ff) the best peace treaty imaginable is one lasting thirty years.

50 **against each other**: an important qualification, for there is always the possibility of war with Persia (cf. 1133).

51 **the Two Goddesses**: Greek *tō theō* could be either masculine or feminine. At Athens it was feminine and denoted Demeter and her daughter Persephone; oaths in their name were used only by women. At Sparta *tō siō* were a pair of male gods, and either sex could swear by them; see on 81.

53 **a little toy sword**: the diminutive form *xiphidion* is used to emphasize the idea that men will use no weapon at all, not even the smallest.

57 **everything they do is too late**: fifth-century Athenians were more often censured for haste than for slowness; but in the years 414–411 Athens had suffered a long succession of political and military setbacks, many of which could be attributed to procrastination – Nicias' failure to complete the investment of Syracuse before the arrival of Gylippus turned the tide of the campaign; his disastrous refusal in 413 to allow the expeditionary force to withdraw when it might have done so in safety; and more recently, a series of occasions when Athenian naval forces had appeared before cities in the eastern Aegean too late to prevent their revolting from the Athenian alliance. In connection with these last, it may be relevant that *Attikai* 'Athenian (women)' is a word often used to denote Athenian *ships* (e.g. Thucydides 1.47.1, 7.19.5), and that from here to 64 the dialogue retains something of a nautical flavour.

58–59 **the Paralia ... Salamis**: there is no obvious reason why the women of the Paralia (the coastal regions of south-east Attica), or those of the island of Salamis, should have been expected to be early for the meeting; but Lysistrata, whose mind has been running on recent naval operations (see above), is thinking of the two specially fast 'sacred' triremes *Salaminia* and *Paralus*: if these are Athens' quickest-moving ships, the districts bearing the same names should produce Athens' quickest-moving women!

60 **working over on their pinnaces**: the Greek is neatly ambiguous between (1) crossing <the strait between Salamis and the mainland> on their boats and (2) bestriding their mounts with reference to the coital position in which the woman is above the man and straddles him.

62–63 **the Acharnian women**: the district of Acharnae in central Attica had been one of the first to be ravaged by the Peloponnesian invaders in 431 (Thucydides 2.19–21, cf. *Acharnians* 226–233) and must have suffered heavily again since the Spartan occupation in 413 of Decelea some eight

miles away; but it is probably singled out for mention here mainly in order to provide a 'feed' for the ensuing joke about Theogenes' wife.

63 **Theogenes' wife**: Theogenes of Acharnae was a merchant and shipowner who had the reputation of a vain boaster pretending to be much richer than he was (cf. *Birds* 822, 1127, 1295) and was accordingly nicknamed 'Smoke'; he was also often satirized as a dirty boor, and his name linked with faeces and flatus (*Wasps* 1183–4; *Peace* 928). He had been active in politics at least since 425 (Thucydides 4.27.3); we last hear of him (if it is the same Theogenes) in 409 when he was a member of an abortive embassy to Persia. His wife is no more likely than most other Athenian wives to have been a publicly known personality in her own right, and her behaviour as here described will have been meant to be taken as comically appropriate not to her but to her husband.

64 **putting on all sail**: lit. 'hoisting her boat-sail'. The boat-sail (*akateion*) was a small sail carried by warships. It was not used in normal sailing; before a battle, however, it was usual to take down and stow the main sail and its mast, or even to put them ashore, while keeping the boat-sail and *its* mast on board, ready to be raised if the ship had to make a fast escape from danger.

67–68 **Lousia ... opened a real can of lice**: there really was an Attic deme named Lousia, but the deme named in the Greek text is actually Anagyrus, situated between Mount Hymettus and the sea near the modern Vari. The deme was named after the malodorous shrub *anagȳros* (the bean-trefoil, *Anagyris foetida*) and it was evidently a standing joke among other Athenians that the deme's inhabitants were equally smelly. Calonice in her rejoinder plays on the proverbial expression *kīnein ton anagȳron*, literally 'shake the anagyros', i.e. disturb something that would be much less of a nuisance if left alone, or as modern idiom has it 'open a can of worms'.

69–253 In this scene the identification of speakers is frequently uncertain, except for Lampito who is always distinguished by her dialect. Lysistrata is the leader of the women's plot, and in general maintains an authoritative and (by Old Comic standards) comparatively serious tone. As between the other two Athenian women, I assume that once the initial interest in Myrrhine, generated by her entrance, has worn off, she is as it were 'recessive' and Calonice 'dominant', so that (i) when Lysistrata has only one Athenian interlocutor, it is Calonice, and (ii) when both Calonice and Myrrhine speak, Calonice shows herself the more forceful character. Note that Calonice is older than most of the women on stage (see on 7) whereas Myrrhine is young and attractive (cf. 829–979).

70 **Myrrhine** ('Myrtle') was both a common woman's name in actual Athenian life and a stock name for a married woman in comedy, where it is borne by characters in four plays of Menander (*Dyskolos, Georgos, Heros, Perikeiromene*) as well as in Plautus' *Casina* and Terence's *Hecyra*.

77 **here comes Lampito now**: many have argued that this line should be assigned to Lysistrata because only she would be likely to know Lampito. Evidently the illogicality of Myrrhine's knowing the name of the Spartan women's leader is a minor matter compared with the importance of ensuring that the audience know it. The significance of the name is probably that it marks its bearer as a woman of high rank: Lampito was a royal name at Sparta, that of the mother of the then reigning king Agis II

(Herodotus 6.71.2) – though she was long dead by 411 and there is no question of the character Lampito in this play representing her in any sense. The Boeotian and Corinthian women are likewise of high social standing (cf. 90, 697).

80 **what a fine colour**: Athenian women were expected to be pale; but Lampito is suntanned from outdoor exercise (cf. 82).

81ff Lampito, and the other Spartans who appear later in the play, speak a dialect which corresponds fairly closely (though with some lapses) with that of Sparta as known from inscriptions and other sources.

81 **by the Two Gods**: to a Spartan 'the Two Gods' are the Dioscuri, Castor and Pollux, brothers of Helen and special patrons of Sparta (cf. 1300–1); they also sometimes swear by Castor alone (206, 988). Cf. on 51.

81 **I do gymnastics**: the upbringing of Spartan girls included physical training parallel to, though separate from, that given to boys – though the idea that *married* Spartan women continued with a systematic programme of exercises is no doubt a product of Aristophanes' imagination.

82 **jump heel-to-buttocks**: i.e. jump with bent knee, so as to kick the buttocks with the back of the heel.

84 **like a victim for sacrifice**: that is, like an animal being examined to determine whether it was sufficiently fattened (cf. *Knights* 1135–40) to be ready for slaughter.

87 **she represents Boeotia all right**: Lampito had said that Ismenia was *Boiōtiā* ('a Boeotian woman'); Myrrhine however understands (or pretends to understand) *Boiōtiā* as the name of the country, as though Ismenia were Boeotia personified. It was not uncommon for personifications (usually feminine) of towns or countries to appear in flesh and blood on the comic stage, as in the choruses of Eupolis' plays *Cities* and *Demes* (the latter produced in 412) and of the *Islands* attributed to Aristophanes.

88 **lowland region**: Greek *pedion* 'plain', with reference (i) to the fertile plains for which Boeotia was noted, (ii) to Ismenia's pubic region (cf. *Birds* 507).

89 **mint shoots**: strictly 'pennyroyal' (*Mentha pulegium*), mentioned as a Boeotian product in *Acharnians* 861, 869, 874. Here the reference is to pubic hair: Ismenia's has been carefully trimmed by plucking. Cf. *Frogs* 516, *Ecclesiazusae* 12–13.

90 **a lady of noble line**: Greek *khāhiā*, a Doric adjective of commendation which is capable of referring to almost anything about a person that is thought to merit admiration. Lampito probably means 'of noble birth' (cf. on 77 and 86); Calonice takes her as meaning 'well-endowed physically' with reference to two well-padded portions of the Corinthian's person.

103 **the Thracian Coast**: lit. 'the parts in the direction of Thrace', the usual expression for the areas of Greek settlement on the northern shore of the Aegean. Our passage shows that an Athenian force was operating in that region early in 411 , probably trying to force subject states which have revolted to rejoin the Athenian alliance, but we know nothing of its activities or its degree of success. It was presumably to the command of this force that Dieitrephes was appointed in the spring by the oligarchs at Samos (Thucydides 8.64.2).

103 **Eucrates**: a surprise substitute for the name of some city that the Athenians were blockading or besieging. Eucrates was presumably the Athenian commander in the Thracian region; he is most probably to be identified with Eucrates, son of Niceratus of the deme Cydantidae, the brother of the famous Nicias.

104 **Pylos**: a strategic promontory on the west coast of the Peloponnese, seized by the Athenians under Demosthenes in 425 and held ever since by an Athenian garrison reinforced by Messenian exiles (Thucydides 4.41.2). The Spartans recaptured it in 410–9 .

106 **he's fastened on his shield-band**: the reference is to a detachable strip of bronze (*porpāx*) usually running from edge to edge of the inner face of a shield, through which the wearer passed his left arm. When a Spartan hung his shield up at home he removed the *porpāx*, so that if a helot were to steal the shield he could not use it.

108 **the Milesians deserted us**: Miletus had revolted the previous summer (Thucydides 8.17).

109 **a six-inch dildo**: Six inches (lit. 'eight fingers') is not a large size for such an accessory, and Lysistrata probably means 'a six-inch dildo (sc. much less a decent-sized one)'.

113 **mantle**: Greek *enkuklon* (lit. 'circular'), a type of woman's outer garment.

114 **drink my purse dry**: Greek *ekpiein* could mean either 'drink up' or 'spend, squander'. Hence it is left in doubt whether Calonice is offering to donate to the cause of peace the whole proceeds of pawning her mantle and other possessions, or whether (in accordance with the usual stereotype: cf. 195–239, 466, *Thesmophoriazusae* 630–2, 733–755, *Ecclesiazusae* 132–157, 227) she would instead spend the money on wine.

115–6 Calonice would be willing, for the sake of peace, to pawn the clothes off her back; Myrrhine caps this by declaring her readiness to give half of her own body to the cause.

117 **Mount Taÿgetum**: this range forms the western boundary of Laconia; its highest peak is 2,407 metres (7,897 feet) and, rising as it does almost sheer from the plain of Sparta, it would have seemed to an ancient Spartan literally impossible to climb.

118 **if I was going to be able to see peace from there**: peace is here conceived as a physical object, perhaps (as in *Peace*) a goddess: if she is very far away, or has been concealed (cf. *Peace* 221–4, 979–990), it might be possible to espy her from a mountain peak. There may be an allusion to the story of the last fight of the Dioscuri against Idas and Lynceus, the sons of Aphareus: Lynceus, who had eyesight of superhuman acuteness, surveyed the whole of the Peloponnese from the summit of Taÿgetum and saw the Dioscuri hiding in the hollow stump of an oak tree, with the result that he and Idas were able to attack them and (in Pindar's version) kill Castor, though at the cost of their own lives.

124 **cock and balls**: in the Greek, Lysistrata uses the single (and thoroughly vulgar) word *peos* 'cock'.

126 **tossing your heads**: to toss back the head was the gesture equivalent to saying 'no', cf. *Acharnians* 113, 611, *Iliad* 22.205.

127 **'Why pales your colour, why this flow of tears?'**: the phraseology is tragic (as befits this moment of seeming disaster for Lysistrata's plans), but no specific model is known and the line may be pastiche.

128 **Will you do it ... why do you hesitate?**: again the language is reminiscent of tragedy.

133–5 The vehemence of this refusal is in character for Calonice (cf. on 69–253), but there is also a case for giving these lines to Myrrhine, to whom Lysistrata's immediately preceding words were addressed.

134 **rather that than cock and balls**: in her agitation the speaker leaves out the essential words 'abstain from'.

136 requires, exceptionally, a fifth speaking actor.

139 **Poseidon and a tub**: the reference is to one of Sophocles' two plays about Tyro. Tyro, daughter of Salmoneus, was in love with the river-god Enipeus and frequented the river's banks, where she was seduced by Poseidon in Enipeus' likeness (cf. *Odyssey* 11.235–259). She gave birth to twins (Neleus and Pelias), whom she exposed in a tub or trough (*skaphē* or *skaphos*) on the river's edge; they were rescued, grew up and eventually saved their mother from the cruelty of her father and her step-mother Sidero. According to Aristotle the mutual recognition of mother and children was effected by means of the *skaphē*, though this may refer to trinkets, etc., left in it together with the infants rather than to the receptacle itself. To the disillusioned Lysistrata all women now seem to resemble Tyro in their lustfulness ('Poseidon') and their irresponsibility ('a tub').

143 **Big Red**: Greek *psōlā* denotes a penis with the *glans* exposed, whether by circumcision (cf. *Acharnians* 161) or, as here implied, through sexual excitement (cf. 979, 1136, *Peace* 903).

145 **you're the only real woman here**: Lysistrata means exactly what a male leader would mean if he said to one of his followers 'you're the only real man here', i.e. the only one who has given evidence of courage and readiness to endure adversity; but the compliment is amusingly inconsistent both with the average spectator's prejudices about women's nature and with Lysistrata's own words just before (137–9).

149–166 This plan of campaign, which is to be carried out 'at home', is forgotten once the wives on stage join the older women in the Acropolis; but later on (829–979) the audience will actually see it being put into effect in a modified form.

150–1 **came into their rooms**: sc. from the women's quarters; but Greek *parioimen* could also mean 'walked past them'.

150–1 **lawn shifts**: evidently diaphanous, like the 'Cimberic straight-liners' of 45 (cf. 48), as is proved by the reference to the plucking of pubic hair. They were made of *amorgis*, a delicate and expensive material which ancient commentators and lexicographers were unable to identify with certainty, but which either was, or was of similar texture to, extra-fine linen.

151 **delta-style**: i.e. trimming our pubic hair into a neat triangle.

152 **the old spleck-spleck**: Greek *splekoun* 'have intercourse' is probably onomatopoeic in origin, as was perceived by the unknown lexicographer some of whose work is preserved in the manuscript Venetus Marcianus 444 of Harpocration.

153 **didn't come to them**: the reading of the papyrus ('didn't cast them a glance') is inferior; seductive glances might well *aid* the women's cause by intensifying the men's excitement and frustration.

155–6 **Menelaus ... drop out of his hand**: when, at the sack of Troy, Menelaus found Helen at the house of Deiphobus, he pursued her meaning to kill her, but was overmastered by her beauty and let fall his sword. It is particularly appropriate that it should be Lampito who refers to the story, since Menelaus was king of Sparta.

155 **Helen's two little apples**: 'Helen's bosom'.

157 **what if our husbands just ignore us?**: no living woman has the beauty of Helen, and her success in disarming Menelaus cannot therefore guarantee the success of Lysistrata's scheme.

158 **Pherecrates**: a comic dramatist, an older contemporary of Aristophanes. He won his first victory probably in 437; his last datable play seems to belong to 415 and he may well have been dead when *Lysistrata* was produced. He is said to have avoided personal satire (though the fragments show that he did not eschew it completely) and to have shown originality in plot construction. This is Aristophanes' only known reference to him.

158 **skin the skinned dog**: evidently quoted from a comedy of Pherecrates, though apparently the play in question did not survive into Hellenistic times, for ancient scholars could not find the phrase in the plays available to them. Lysistrata is using the phrase in a presumably novel sense which Calonice understands perfectly (and so will the audience). To 'skin a dog' meant to cause, by stimulation, the erection of a penis (for which *kuōn* 'dog' was one of many slang names) and the consequential retraction of its foreskin. In this case, however, the 'dog' is itself to be the product of a process of 'skinning', i.e. a dildo made of leather (cf. 109–110), with which the women are if necessary to practise do-it-yourself sex until the time comes (as it soon will, cf. 154, 164–5) when the men can resist their charms no longer.

162 **in the grudgingest way**: lit. 'bad-badly', i.e. without any sign of enjoyment or responsiveness.

163 **there's no pleasure in it when it's done by force**: this is not a statement about rape in general (to which males in Aristophanes show no aversion whatever: cf. *Acharnians* 271–5, *Peace* 1337–40, *Birds* 1253–6) but about the feelings of a man who finds that the woman with whom he has enjoyed a happy sexual relationship for years has suddenly become an iceberg.

164 **vex them generally**: i.e. refuse also to perform a wife's *other* duties; cf. 881, 894–7.

169 **with complete honesty and sincerity**: a common phrase in treaties and oaths of peace (e.g. Thucydides 5.18.9; 5.23.2; 5.47.10). Few Athenians, however, believed that Spartans could be trusted to keep their word (cf. 629, *Acharnians* 308, *Peace* 623, 1063–86; Herodotus 9.54.1; Thucydides 5.105.4), and even Lysistrata thinks it necessary to ensure Lampito's fidelity by detaining some of her compatriots as hostages (244).

170 **that riffraff**: Lampito, being Spartan and notably class-conscious (cf. on 77, 86, 90), naturally has a low opinion of Athenian democracy.

173 **while your warships still have feet**: oars can be called the feet of a ship; alternatively 'have feet' may be a way of saying 'are mobile'. To a Greek or Roman *sailor* the 'feet' (*podes, pedes*) of a ship were the *sheets* (cf.

Knights 436), but why should that particular item of gear be singled out here? Oars were in short supply at Athens in 411 (cf. 421–2).

174 **money in the house of your Goddess**: for over twenty years the financial reserves of the Athenian state had been kept on the Acropolis in the *opisthodomos*, which is probably to be identified with the patched-up west end of the ancient temple of Athena Polias. These reserves, however, were far from 'bottomless': a few months earlier the Assembly had voted to spend the emergency reserve of 1000 talents which had been set aside in 431, although the contingency for which it had been intended had not arisen (Thucydides 8.15.1).

177 **the over-age women**: in the Athenian army 'the oldest' (*presbytatoi*) were men past the normal age for active service (except in emergency) who were employed on home defence and garrison duties (Thucydides 1.105.4, 2.13.6); the *presbytatai* of Lysistrata's feminine army are those who are too old to be able to take an effective part in the sex-strike.

184 **that Scythian girl**: the view taken here is that the 'Scythian girl' (*Skuthaina*) is a household slave of Lysistrata's, and that the 'shield' (*aspis*) which she is carrying (185) is a wine-bowl shaped like a shield, which, having both a woman's propensity to drink and a slave's to steal, she was perhaps about to fill surreptitiously for her own use.

186 **the severed pieces**: Greek *tomia*, a sacral term denoting the testicles of a sacrificial victim on which one stood when taking a solemn oath. In this case no animal has been killed and no *tomia* are available, but Calonice's interruption ensures that we are not given time to wonder how Lysistrata expects to procure them.

188 **Aeschylus once made people swear**: in *Seven against Thebes* (42–48), where the Scout speaks of the Seven 'cutting a bull's throat for the blood to run into a black shield and touching the bull's blood with their hands' as they swore to destroy Thebes or die in the attempt.

190 **don't take an oath about peace over any shield**: lit. 'don't swear anything concerning peace into a shield'. Cf. *Peace* 1018–9 'Peace takes no delight in slaughter, nor is her altar bloodied': that objection, like this one, has the effect of preventing a sacrificial slaughter from being performed on stage.

191–2 **a white stallion**: horse sacrifice was (believed to be) common among non-Greek peoples (cf. Herodotus 1.216.4, 7.113.2), and according to the scholia here it was said to be a custom of those models of female assertiveness and domination, the Amazons; Greeks practised it only in a few isolated cults and on one or two exceptional occasions. When the colour of a sacrificial horse is mentioned it is almost always white regardless of the nature of the sacrifice. Calonice's idea here of using a horse as an *oath-sacrifice* is probably taken from the famous story of the oath of Helen's suitors, which according to Pausanias was administered by Tyndareos over the 'severed pieces' of a horse.

193 **White stallion indeed!**: Lysistrata finds Calonice's suggestion self-evidently absurd – as indeed it was, on grounds of cost alone.

195–7 Lysistrata modifies her own original proposal (188–9) into a form more suited both to the theme of peace and to the supposed tastes of women.

195 **base-down**: Greek *huptiān,* the same word translated 'face-down' in 185; the repetition signals that the cup is to perform the same role previously assigned to the 'shield'.

196 **Thasian wine** from the island of Thasos was a much-praised variety noted for its dark colour and its sweet aroma.

197 **swear to pour no water in our cup**: in its literal sense this is certain to appeal strongly to the women, who like their wine neat (cf. *Ecclesiazusae* 153–5, 227, 1123), but Lysistrata probably means it metaphorically: the 'cup' is the vagina and the 'water' its lubricating secretion produced before and during intercourse.

198 **I can't say how much**: lit. '(it's) unspeakable how', an expression used again by a Spartan in 1148 (cf. 1080) but also found in colloquial Attic.

203 **the boar**: continuing the pretence that the jar is a sacrificial animal, perhaps with a recollection of Agamemnon's oath in *Iliad* 19.249–268 which was coupled with the slaughter of a boar.

203 **O Lady Persuasion**: Greek *peithō* can refer to *any* non-violent method of inducing another person to think or act differently, including not only the sex-strike but even the occupation of the Acropolis; cf. 171–2.

203 **O Cup of Amity**: Greek *kulix philotesiā*, a cup by the sharing of which two or more persons pledge friendship to one another. Lysistrata is in effect invoking the spirit of solidarity (cf. on 41) on which the success of her scheme crucially depends.

204 **be thou gracious ... receive this sacrifice**: the verb is singular, although two divinities were addressed; Lysistrata is thinking primarily of the cup, which was mentioned last and which is about to 'receive' the wine in a very literal sense.

205 **The blood's good colour and gushes out well**: at real sacrifices this was regarded as a good omen; 'a good colour' would normally mean red rather than black, but for Thasian wine it is black that is beautiful (cf. on 196).

207 **to swear**: i.e. to drink.

208 **not unless you draw the first lot**: this implies that lots were sometimes drawn to determine the order of drinking at a symposium.

219 **in make-up and saffron gown**: in the Greek the line (of three words) is identical with 44 except for a necessary change from plural to singular.

229 **I will not raise up my Persian slippers ceilingwards**: 'raising the legs' was a common sexual posture for women, and evidently one that men considered especially pleasurable. Here 'legs' is comically replaced by 'Persian slippers' (strictly, *Persikai* appear to have been soft ankle-shoes, much worn by women).

231 **the lioness-on-a-cheesegrater position**: 'standing on all fours': the woman stood bending forward (sometimes resting her hands on the ground or on a bed), in a posture reminiscent of a lion crouched to spring, and was penetrated from behind (either vaginally or anally). The reference to a cheese-grater is due to the fact that the handles of such utensils were often made in the form of crouching animals.

238 **consecrate**: Here Lysistrata is not going to have the 'offering' consumed by fire, but to consume it herself!

244 **these others**: apparently including not only the other Spartan women (who reappear at 1273) but also the Corinthian and the Theban; henceforth (except for one reference to Ismenia the Theban at 697) the hoped-for peace will be thought of as a bilateral one between 'the Athenians and their allies' and 'the Lacedaemonians and their allies' (cf. 1177–81), and the enemy states other than Sparta will have no independent role in the action.

247 **But don't you expect ...**: a surprised reaction to Lysistrata's calm and confident tone: does she suppose that bolted doors will suffice to repel an attack by the forces of male Athens?

254 **Draces** is a stock name for an old man in a comic chorus. None of these names is known to have been borne by any Athenian in real life.

259 **Strymodorus**: another stock comic name which is not certainly attested in actual Athenian life.

262 **the holy image**: the ancient olive-wood image of Athena Polias, at this time probably housed in the partly finished Erechtheum, whose official name was 'the temple on the Acropolis in which is the ancient image'.

263 **my Acropolis**: cf. 487; the women, with less arrogance and more reverence, speak of the Acropolis as belonging to Athena (241, 345).

264–5 **the Propylaea**: the great western gateway to the Acropolis, which the central door of the stage-house now represents.

266 **Philurgus** means 'lover of work'; Philurgus as an actual Athenian name.

270 **condemned together**: lit. 'by one <and the same> vote', as if the women had been (illegally) convicted *en bloc* in a mass trial.

270 **Lycon's wife**: Lycon was a man who had acquired some notoriety in the late 420s , less however on his own account than on that of his wife and son. His son Autolycus was noted for his beauty and his athletic ability; in 420 Eupolis had made Autolycus the central figure of a comedy, and Xenophon's *Symposium* is set at a party given in honour of Lycon and Autolycus by the youth's lover Callias. Lycon's wife seems to have been a byword for flagrant promiscuity. In the present passage Lycon's wife is presumably singled out for special mention as being the most notoriously wicked citizen wife in Athens and therefore likely to be the ringleader of any wicked female conspiracy.

273 **Cleomenes** (I): one of the kings of Sparta *c.*520–490. In 508 the Athenian archon Isagoras, finding himself threatened by a strong popular faction led by Cleisthenes, invited Cleomenes (with whom he had personal ties) to help him establish an oligarchic régime headed by himself. Cleomenes duly came to Athens with a small force, but found the council and people so hostile that, together with the partisans of Isagoras, he was forced to retire into the Acropolis. There he was besieged for two days, at the end of which a truce was made under which Cleomenes and his Spartans were permitted to leave Attica unharmed; Cleisthenes then returned from a brief exile and became the effective leader of the new Athenian democracy.

277–8 **surrendering his arms ... homespun cloak**: as if Cleomenes and his men had capitulated on the sort of terms commonly offered to a garrison or population surrendering after a siege, whereby they had to give up all their arms and all possessions except for a single garment apiece (cf. e.g. Thucydides 2.70.3). Almost certainly the old men are

grossly exaggerating the humiliation of Cleomenes' defeat: the Athenians will have been as glad to see the back of him as he will have been glad to get away, and it would have been the height of folly for them to heap degradations on a Spartan king that could only have the effect of provoking a second intervention in much greater force.

278 **homespun cloak**: Greek *tribōnion*, a coarse outer garment worn mainly by poor men; it is quite possible that the old men are wearing *tribōnia* themselves.

279–280 **hungry, dirty, hairy-faced, unwashed for six years**: these were all components of the Athenian's stereotype of a typical Spartan or imitator of Spartan ways – and Spartans did in fact wear long hair and untrimmed beards, their diet was restricted and they bathed less frequently than cultured Athenians thought proper.

281 **I'd besieged that man**: if the old men had actually taken part in the siege of the Acropolis in 508 their present age would be at least 115; later (667–9) they will explicitly claim to have fought at Leipsydrium several years earlier still!

283 **enemies of Euripides**: Euripides' alleged hatred of women appears to have been based on the frequency with which he portrayed women who were driven by anger, jealousy, sexual passion, etc., to commit terrible acts (e.g. Medea, Hecuba, Phaedra). No woman character of this kind appears in the seven extant plays of Sophocles (his Electra takes no direct part in the murder of her mother; his Deianeira kills Heracles with a poison which she had been told was a love-charm).

285 **may my trophy no longer stand in the Four Towns**: the 'Four Towns' were Marathon, Oenoe, Probalinthus and Tricory(n)thus in eastern Attica, which formed an ancient association called the Tetrapolis. The Tetrapolis in classical times still had a communal life of its own, with an archon and other officials, an assembly, and at least one joint religious cult. The trophy referred to is that commemorating the victory of Marathon in 490. If the men of Athens so disgrace themselves as to suffer defeat at the hands of women, they are not worthy of the glory of victory over the Persians.

288 **up the slope**: theatrically speaking, this probably refers to the ascent from the *orchēstra* to the platform in front of the stage-house. The old men will never actually complete this last part of their journey; rather than attempt the climb with their heavy burden, they decide (307–311) to lay down their logs, light their torches and then beset the gates – but just as the torches are being lit the old women make their entry, the assault on the gates is never made, and the old men remain in the *orchēstra* for the rest of the play.

304 **Laches**: this is the earliest appearance of what becomes a very frequent stock name for an old man in later comedy.

307–311 **Couldn't we ... with the smoke**: the sentence is grammatically incoherent, the speaker having forgotten by 310 how he began it.

310 **to surrender** is added by the translator for clarity.

313 **the generals at Samos**: since the late summer of 412 Samos had been the principal Athenian naval base in the Aegean, and before long six of the ten generals were there (Thucydides 8.25.1, 8.30.1), but they had achieved little of note, and there may be an implication here that they

are wasting time and public money and that they would be better employed doing some real work that badly needs doing back in Athens. There is probably no reference to anti-democratic conspiracies in the fleet and army at Samos (Thucydides 8.47–51) since it is unlikely that the Athenian public yet knew anything of them.

316 **first of all**: i.e. as the necessary preliminary to the attack on the doors (309–311).

317 **O Lady Victory**: Athena Nike, whose temple stood on the south-west bastion of the Acropolis, to the right of an observer facing the Propylaea; doubtless the old men turn towards where this temple would be, with gestures of prayer.

318 **may we set up a trophy**: cf. 285: the men must defeat the women as they once defeated the Persians. It does not occur to them that in attacking the Acropolis with fire they themselves are doing what the Persians did (cf. Herodotus 8.52–53).

321 **Nicodice**: this name is found on an Athenian tombstone of the mid fourth century ; it may be significant that just after the men have prayed to Victory to help them burn the women out of the Acropolis, the women appeal to a comrade whose name means 'Victory-*for*-*Right*' to help prevent this. Would a victory for the men, then, be a victory for wrong?

324 **terrible winds**: a grandiloquent Homeric phrase (cf. *Iliad* 13.795), here either metaphorical (the threatened fire being imaged as a storm buffeting the Acropolis-ship and its crew) or comically applied to the old men's puffings and blowings as they attempt to light their torches.

328 **the fountain**: probably at the fountain-house called the Enneakrounos, the most important in the city and not far from the Acropolis, which has been identified with one discovered at the south-east corner of the Agora.

331 **tattoo-birds**: Greek *stigmatiais*, slaves who had been tattooed (usually on the forehead) either after running away and being recaptured or for other serious misbehaviour.

337–8 **a couple of hundredweight or so**: lit. 'about three talents in weight', i.e. about 80 kg or 176 lb, of course a vast exaggeration (*one* talent was in origin the load which could be carried by one *fit* man).

337–8 **as if to heat the public baths**: the furnaces at the baths will have consumed a very large quantity of fuel each day; there may be an undertone of contempt for the men, since the occupation of bath-keeper was a despised one.

341–9 The goddess addressed is Athena, to whom, and not to the male citizens (cf. on 263), the Acropolis belongs.

344–5 **Golden-crested**: a traditional poetic epithet of martial deities.

347 **O Lady of the Lake**: Greek *Trītogeneia*, an epithet as old as Homer (e.g. *Iliad* 4.515); it was traditionally associated with the legend of Athena's having been born beside a River Triton or a Lake Tritonis somewhere in North Africa, and some connection with water is further suggested by its similarity to the names of the sea deities Triton and Amphitrite, so it is highly appropriate here where Athena is being invoked as a water-bearer.

350 **Rest, ho!**: calling a halt to the dance and song.

353 **another swarm of women outside**: in addition to the women *inside* the Acropolis, of whom the men already knew.

355 **Phaedrias**: a common name in real life at Athens, but attested directly in Greek comedy only here.

357 **our timber**: i.e. the logs. Normally an old man's weapon is his walking-stick, but this semichorus, who had both hands full when they entered, cannot be carrying sticks.

357 **on their backs**: lit. 'by hitting them'.

358 **too**: i.e. just as the men previously put down their logs.

361 **Bupalus**, a sculptor of Chios, was attacked in several poems by the sixth-century iambic poet Hipponax; the specific reference here is probably to Hipponax fr. 120: 'Take my cloak, I'm going to give Bupalus a sock in the eye'.

363 **no other bitch will ever seize your bollocks**: 'the dogs will eat your private parts' is a dire threat in Homer (*Odyssey* 18.87, cf. *Iliad* 22.75); but here the speaker says that she herself will be the 'bitch' (= shameless woman) who seizes her opponent's testicles (sc. and tears them off) so that no canine bitch will ever have a chance to do so.

365 **Stratyllis**: the speaker names herself in the third person, perhaps with a touch of (unfeminine?) pomposity.

368–9 The men now tacitly admit defeat in the battle of verbal menaces, and are reduced to grumbling among themselves; whereupon the women, no longer fearing any attack from them (contrast 358–9), take the initiative by preparing to douse both the men and their torches. The men's leader has a rather similar couplet at 1014–5, but there the women's response is an offer of peace and friendship.

369 **as he says**: added by the translator for clarity. It is not clear whether or not the ensuing sentiment is an actual quotation or near-quotation from Euripides, though some of the phraseology is definitely tragic. Cf. on 283.

372 **old sepulchre**: lit. 'tomb', an expression for a decrepit old man that appears even in tragedy.

375 **you'll learn for certain soon enough**: lit. 'the deed itself will soon prove it'.

378 **a wedding bath**: an important preliminary to a wedding was the ritual bathing of bride and groom and at Athens the water for this bath was by long tradition taken from that same Enneakrounos fountain-house from which the women have apparently brought *their* water (see on 328). The remark contains an implied insult: this 'bath' is the only 'nuptial' event which the men, at their time of life, are ever now likely to experience.

380 **you're not sitting on a jury now**: the point is that only with the voting-pebble has an old man the power to do harm; thus the speaker means your threats are utterly empty.

381 **set her hair on fire**: cf. 1217–22 – where, however, the intended victims are male, and the threat succeeds in removing them from the scene.

381 **Achelous**: the river Achelous, in the north west of Greece, is the largest in the peninsula and was sometimes thought of as the father of all rivers and springs.

382 **I hope it wasn't too hot**: is she speaking like a barber who has been a little careless with the shaving-water? In fact, of course, the water was very cold.

387 **magistrate**: or 'Commissioner' (Greek *proboulos*): see on 421.

388–9 **their drum-beating ... on the roofs**: the magistrate assumes that the women's occupation of the Acropolis must be somehow connected with the orgiastic religious rites of which they are so fond (cf. 1–3).

388 **'Sabazius'**: Sabazius was a Phrygian god, sometimes identified with Dionysus, whose worship became fairly popular at Athens from the late fifth century onwards, especially among women and slaves.

389 **Adonis rites on the roofs**: the death of Adonis, the mortal youth who was loved by Aphrodite, was commemorated by a festival called the Adonia. The fact that in 415 a meeting of the Assembly could be held during this festival shows that the cult, though at least two centuries old in Greece, was not yet officially recognized by the Athenian state; but it was very popular especially with women, who lamented and sang funeral dirges over effigies of Adonis and sowed seeds of quickly-growing, quickly-withering plants in trays called 'gardens of Adonis' which they carried up to the house-roofs. The festival appears to have been held in high summer, as in the Semitic lands whence it had come to Greece.

390–7 This story purports to refer to an Assembly meeting, one of those held in the first half of 415 which discussed the proposal to send the great expedition to Sicily, which was distinguished by (i) a powerful speech by Demostratus urging that the expedition should sail and (ii) the background noise of women lamenting for Adonis.

391 **Demostratus** belonged to the clan of the Buzygae (see on 397). His name has been restored in an inscription as the proposer of an honorific decree in or about 406–5 .

394 **hoplites**: fully-armed infantrymen.

394 **from Zacynthus**: the island of Zacynthus, off the north-western Peloponnese, was a non-tributary ally of Athens. Demosthenes, bringing reinforcement to Sicily in 413 , enlisted some hoplites from Zacynthus (Thucydides 7.31.2), but when the original expedition sailed in 415 the only non-tributary allies who sent hoplites were Argos and Mantinea (Thucydides 6.43). Either Zacynthus declined to send troops in 415 or Aristophanes has mistakenly antedated the proposal and attributed it to Demostratus instead of Demosthenes.

397 **Brainsickite**: Greek *Kholozygēs*, a portmanteau of *kholōn* 'bile-sick, insane from an excess of bile in the brain' and *Bouzygēs*, the name of the clan (*genos*) to which Demostratus belonged. The clan was an ancient one: its mythical founder, Epimenides surnamed Buzyges, was said to have been the first to yoke oxen for ploughing, and his descendants held two hereditary priesthoods of Zeus and performed an annual ritual ploughing near the Acropolis.

399 **outrageous behaviour**: Greek *hybris*, wanton and contemptuous disregard of the rights or dignity of another – a very strong term, repeated in the next line (where it is rendered 'wanton insolence'): cf. also 425, 658.

403 **the Briny**: Greek *Halykos*, probably not an actual cult-title of Poseidon but a comic substitute for e.g. *Halimedōn* 'ruler of the seas'. The epithet adds emphasis to the oath.

407–419 The point of the two stories is the folly of the husbands in asking strange men to come round and see their wives when they themselves will not be at home; in addition both husbands positively ask for trouble by using ambiguous language (see below).

409 **dancing**: probably at a women's all-night religious celebration (*pannychis*) on the occasion of the Adonia (cf. 392) or some other festival.

411 **I've got to cross over to Salamis**: sc. and be away from home for at least one night.

413 **fit a pin in her hole**: the Greek could mean either 'fit the *balanos* (pin) in<to the eye of the clasp> for her' or 'fit your *balanos* (*glans penis*) into her'.

417 **her little piggy-wiggy**: the man meant to say *daktulidion* 'little toe', but carelessly said *daktulīdion* 'little ring', which could be understood as meaning 'anus'; for heterosexual anal intercourse see on 231 and 1162–3.

418 **in the middle of the day**: when the husband is least likely to be at home.

419 **loosen it up**: by 'it' (*touto*) he means the sandal-strap – but the pronoun could equally well refer to the 'little ring' (cf. on 417).

421 **a Commissioner**: Greek *proboulos*, a member of the special ten-man advisory board set up after the Sicilian disaster of 413, with power to bring forward proposals (apparently direct to the Assembly, bypassing the Council) as occasion might arise (Thucydides 8.1.3); our passage suggests that they also exercised some executive functions at least in the field of external relations, since this *proboulos* has apparently been negotiating with a foreign state for a supply of timber and has authority to make payment for it. The *probouloi* were 'elderly men'; the two whose names we know are Hagnon, who had been the official founder of the colony at Amphipolis in 437 and who was probably at least seventy, and the poet Sophocles who was eighty-five. In the summer of 411 the *probouloi* (together with twenty additional members) were instructed by the Assembly to bring forward proposals for the safety and good government of Athens; they proposed the suspension of all legal safeguards against unconstitutional legislation (Thucydides 8.67.2), thus making possible the establishment of the oligarchy of the Four Hundred. It was later said that Sophocles had been the only *proboulos* to oppose these measures.

421–2 **having secured a supply of timber for oars**: after the Sicilian disaster there had been a critical shortage of timber for naval purposes at Athens (Thucydides 8.1.3), and although supplies had been procured in 413–2 the long, strong spars needed for making oars remained hard to come by. We hear that later in 411 the Athenian exile Andocides brought a supply of oar-spars from Macedonia to the fleet at Samos – without which, he claims, they could not have won their subsequent naval victories over the Peloponnesians; and in 407–6 the Macedonian king Archelaus was officially thanked and honoured by the Athenians *inter alia* for his willingness to supply them with 'timber and oar-spars'.

422 **requiring the money**: cf. on 174.

425 **insolence**: Greek *hybris* (cf. on 399).

427 **Seeing if you can see a wine-shop, I've no doubt**: lit. 'doing nothing other than look out for a wine-shop'.

428–432 **Get those crowbars ... It's not crowbars that are needed**: in the Greek the word *mokhlos* 'crowbar, lever' and its derivatives are used six times within the space of four lines.

431 **I'm coming out of my own free will**: this is the first of four entries through the stage-house door by Lysistrata, and each time she appears unsummoned (706, 1106, 1273), emphasising her mastery of the situation and her control of the Acropolis.

433 **an archer**: the Athenian state owned a corps of Scythian slaves armed with bows, who performed certain police functions under the direction of public officials.

435–6 **if he touches me ... I'll make him howl, public servant though he is**: if this punctuation and interpretation are correct, the point is that a publicly-owned slave had much more extensive legal rights than an ordinary slave and could, for example, sue a citizen for assault; the status of a public slave, when contrasted with that of an ordinary slave, could even be termed 'freedom'. Alternatively the meaning may be 'if he, public slave that he is, dares to touch me, I'll make him howl', the point in that case being that it is outrageous for a slave of the *polis* to lay hands on a citizen of the *polis*.

439 **first old woman**: this woman, and the two who enter at 443 and 447, are presumably three of the 'over-age women' mentioned in 177; one of them is addressed as 'old woman' by the Magistrate at 506. This scene requires a fifth actor (cf. on 136).

439 **Pandrosus** was one of the daughters of the mythical Athenian king Cecrops; she had a precinct on the Acropolis close to the temple of Athena Polias.

441–2 **Shit indeed! ... she can't even hold her tongue** (i.e. she not only obstructs the police in the execution of their duty but uses insolent language as well): the Magistrate's furious reaction is readily comprehensible: with the exception of two passages in the second part of *Ecclesiazusae* (595, 1062), when the power-relations between men and women have been reversed, this is the only place in Aristophanes where a woman utters a crudely obscene word in the presence of men (for this purpose choruses taking no part in the action are deemed not to be 'present': note that in the Cinesias-Myrrhine scene the presence of the baby proves an embarrassment [907–9] but the presence of the chorus is totally ignored). In contrast similar obscenities are fairly freely used by men in the presence of women (fifteen times in *Lysistrata*, *Thesmophoriazusae* and *Ecclesiazusae* alone) and by women among themselves (nine times in these three plays).

443 **the Bringer of Light**: Greek *Phōsphoros*, a title of Hecate, a goddess much worshipped by women (cf. 700) who had a sanctuary on the Acropolis beside the temple of Athena Nike.

444 **you'll soon be begging for a cupping-vessel**: i.e. you will get a black eye and want to use a *kyathos*, a bronze vessel that could be applied to the skin for the relief of bruises and swellings.

447 **Tauropolos**: the title under which Artemis was worshipped at Halae Araphenides on the east coast of Attica; her festival, the Tauropolia, was

an occasion for all-night celebrations by women. Euripides (in the *Iphigenia in Tauris*) had recently aetiologized the title and festival as derived from the adventures of Orestes and Iphigeneia in the land of the Scythian Tauri, and perhaps that is why the speaker uses this particular oath here in threatening a Scythian.

448 **groananwailing**: Greek *stenokōkūtous*, lit. 'groan-bewailed', i.e. 'in such a way that you will groan and wail'.

450 **we must never let ourselves be beaten by women**: a near-quotation of Sophocles, *Antigone* 678. Those who remembered *Antigone* will have recalled that the speaker, Creon, paid dearly for his male arrogance; it may also not be wholly irrelevant that Sophocles was one of the *probouloi*.

454 **fully armed fighting women**: in terms of all the norms of Greek culture, a monstrous violation of nature (cf. 674–9); but there was one Athenian female who *was* an armed warrior – the city's goddess Athena.

455 **twist their arms behind them**: a preliminary to tying them up (438, 442), cf. *Odyssey* 22.189–190.

456 **women of the reserve**: lit. 'allied women'. Note Lysistrata's mingling of military language (here and in 461) with the language of street brawls (459–460) and with comic sesquipedalianisms (457–8).

457 **you brood of the porridge and vegetable market**: a single word in the Greek, approximately 'seed-of-the market-porridge-vegetable-sellers'.

458 **garlic-landlady-breadsellers**: again a single Greek word, comprehending two more groups of market-women and also innkeepers.

461 **no stripping the bodies**: it was regular practice after a battle for the victors to strip the enemy dead of their armour and equipment, but it would be unwise for a general to allow his troops to do this until it was clear that the fighting was indeed over. Hence the order Lysistrata gives here is one that must often have been given after a successful sortie or minor action. In the actual situation it is of course incongruous, there being no corpses on the 'battlefield'.

466 **if there's a wine-shop nearby**: i.e. only when well primed with drink are women likely to display the 'manlike' quality of anger. Alternatively the implication may be that a woman's anger is most often directed against wine-shop keepers who give short measure or over-dilute their wine.

470 **soap**: strictly 'pearl-ash'.

478–9 **you**: the addressee is the Magistrate.

481 **Cranaus' Hold**: the Acropolis is here called *Kranaā* which will originally have meant 'the rocky (citadel)' but by Aristophanes' time had come to be explained as derived from the name of a mythical king Cranaus; the name *Kranaā* could also be applied to Athens as a whole and *Kranaoi* to the Athenians.

482 **forbidden**: lit. 'not-to-be-trodden-on', a rhetorical exaggeration; the Acropolis was sacred ground, but like other sanctuaries it was accessible to the public, though the prohibition on anyone (except those directly concerned with the Acropolis cults) *dwelling* on the Acropolis was strictly enforced even during the war when many other sanctuaries were occupied by refugees from the countryside.

484 **Now question her**: this is the only Aristophanic *agon* in which the first speaker is urged in the opening stages to question his opponent rather than to state his own case; and in the result the Magistrate never gets the opportunity to state his own case, and his opening question, extending to two lines, is his longest continuous utterance in the whole *agon*. Here, as in *Acharnians* and *Peace* (both of which lack an *agon* altogether), no one is allowed to present a coherent argument for the continuation of war.

489 **all the other agitation**: this must refer to some matter or matters not directly connected with the war, and probably to something in which Peisander was prominently involved; possibly then to his activities in connection with the Hermae and Mysteries affairs in 415, when he claimed that a vast anti-democratic conspiracy was afoot, proposed a reward of 10,000 drachmas for whoever should give information about acts of sacrilege, and later, in order to discover the full extent of the alleged plot, tried to persuade the Council to suspend the law forbidding citizens to be tortured.

490 **Peisander**: son of Glaucetes, of the deme Acharnae, had been a significant figure in Athenian politics at least since 426 when Aristophanes was already accusing him of favouring war from corrupt motives. In 422–21 he was a military officer, perhaps a taxiarch; in 421–20 he was elected to a three-man board supervising the making of two statues for the temple of Hephaestus. In 415, being considered 'very loyal to the people', he was elected to the commission of inquiry investigating the mutilation of the Hermae and other acts of sacrilege (cf. previous note). Having thus for most of his career been a typical 'demagogue', he suddenly came forward early in 411 as a supporter of oligarchy and was a key figure in the manoeuvres which by the summer had put the Four Hundred in power (Thucydides 8.49–56, 63–68). It is likely, however, that his new allegiance was not yet publicly known at the time of the Lenaea; Lysistrata here assumes that he and his like can be expected to do in the future as they have done in the past, unless they are prevented from doing so. After the fall of the Four Hundred Peisander escaped, with others, to the Spartan camp at Deceleia and was condemned to death in his absence and his property confiscated. He was often satirized in comedy as a big, clumsy man, and especially as a coward.

490 **all those who were eager to hold office**: it is a standard comic assumption that office-holders embezzle public funds and property; hence it can be alleged that men who look forward to being office-holders in the near future will try to replenish the treasury by 'stirring up some brouhaha' that results in prosecutions and convictions and hence in fines and confiscations (as happened, on a very large scale, as a result of the religious scandals of 415: cf. last two notes) so that there will be more money for them to steal when they get the chance to do so.

492 **getting hold of**: lit. 'taking down', sc. from the Acropolis to the lower town.

495 **don't we manage the household finances ...?**: it was the wife's traditional duty to be the manager of the money and chattels within the home.

503 **unless you want a hiding**: the Magistrate, like Lysistrata's husband (520; cf. also 516), thinks it quite proper to strike a woman merely for

talking about matters that ought not to concern her. This attitude is found in Aristophanes only in the present play; elsewhere physical violence against women is associated with drunkenness (cf. *Wasps* 1388ff) or with moral corruption (cf. *Clouds* 1443ff). Even female slaves, in marked contrast to male slaves, seem never to be beaten, though they are sometimes raped (cf. *Acharnians* 271–5, *Wasps* 768–770). In view of Old Comedy's fondness for physical violence in general this taboo on such violence against women must be regarded as significant, and the breach of the taboo in the present scene highlights the arrogance and unreasonableness of Athenian males.

513 **to inscribe ... as a footnote to the peace treaty**: this refers to a decision taken during the winter of 419–18. The Spartans had put a garrison into Epidaurus, Epidaurus then being at war with Argos, an ally of Athens since 420. Argos demanded Athenian retaliation against Sparta notwithstanding the Athenian-Spartan peace treaty of 421, and on the proposal of Alcibiades (at that time the chief promoter of Argive interests at Athens) the Athenian Assembly voted (1) to inscribe upon the stone slab recording the treaty of 421 the words 'The Spartans have not kept their oaths', (2) to reactivate Pylos as a base for guerrilla operations in Spartan-controlled Messenia. This Athenian support for Argos resulted, within a few months, in Athens being involved in a major campaign in the Peloponnese and in defeat at the battle of Mantinea, and might easily have resulted in a renewal of full-scale war with Sparta, though in the event, despite much provocation, Sparta did not declare war until 413. The proper Athenian course, if they considered Sparta had broken the treaty of 421, should have been to demand arbitration.

517 **some other even worse decision**: if any specific decision is here alluded to, it would surely have to be the decision to send the great expedition to Sicily (cf. on 390–7 and 398).

518 **you**: is plural (= you men).

520 **'war is for men to take care of'**: so Hector said to Andromache (*Iliad* 6.492); but *he* said it at the end of a long conversation in which he had been full of sincere and tender concern for the fate of his wife and child. For the husband here, on the other hand, the adage merely serves as justification for ignoring the opinions and feelings of his wife.

524 **'There isn't a man in the country'**: the words could equally well be understood as a question, 'Isn't there a man in the country?' It is not clear whether the complaint is of a shortage of soldiers (after the heavy losses in Sicily) or of a lack of leaders.

525 **unite to save Greece**: cf. 41.

530–1 **you wear a veil about your head**: women outside the home would normally lower their head-covering over their face to serve as a veil. Often this head-covering was simply the woman's outer garment (*himation*) pulled up over the head, but sometimes, as here, the veil (*kalymma*) was a separate item of dress.

535 **this basket**: women were expected to busy themselves with woolworking when not otherwise occupied, and often carried the wool and implements about with them in a basket (*kalathiskos*). In addition to a supply of wool, the basket would contain a carding-comb, a distaff, a spindle, and a hand-loom.

536 **hitch up your robe**: so as to have both hands free to work.

537 **chewing beans**: 'to avoid falling asleep' while doing this monotonous work; chewing beans was a common practice among Attic peasants but grossly beneath the dignity of a high public official.

539 **move off away from the pitchers**: the women have evidently put down their now empty pitchers but are still standing near them, probably at one side of the *orchēstra;* now they will move into the centre in order to sing and dance the ensuing antistrophe.

549 **of all mummies and all nettly grannies**: i.e. of all mature women.

550 **advance in fury**: as if to battle.

553 **delightful**: in one way ironic, since the men will find their ithyphallic condition both painful and undignified, and it is Lysistrata's intention that they should; but from women's point of view this condition in men *is* delightful, both under normal circumstances (as promising them sexual pleasure) and in the exceptional situation created by Lysistrata (as evidence that the women's strike is proving effective and the men will soon be forced to make peace).

553 **attacks of truncheonism**: Greek *rhopalismoi*, an *ad hoc* pseudo-medical term coined on the basis of *rhopalon* 'club'.

554 **the Dissolvers of Strife**: Greek *Lȳsimakhai,* the plural form of the name of the incumbent priestess of Athena Polias.

555–6 **doing their shopping in armour**: since the Spartan occupation of Deceleia in 413 Athens had 'changed from a city into a fortress' with large numbers constantly under arms in readiness for an enemy attack.

558 **as if they were Corybantes**: there appears here to be confusion or syncretism between the Corybantes (Phrygian divinities attendant upon Cybele, associated with ecstatic dancing to the music of flutes and drums) and the Curetes (Cretan divinities who danced in armour around the infant Zeus); for the Corybantes have properly no association with armour. The mention of Corybantes is particularly appropriate to the present context because their name was associated with delirium and insanity.

560 **and a Gorgon on it**: the Gorgon-head had been a common shield-blazon since the seventh century and in Aristophanes' time it was one of the limited set of traditional devices in regular use.

560 **ravenfish**: a small and cheap kind of fish.

561 **a long-haired chap**: long hair was associated by Athenians with wealth and arrogance and was especially affected by those who served in the cavalry.

561 **a cavalry officer**: strictly 'a phylarch', the commander of one of the ten tribal contingents of which the cavalry corps consisted.

562 **his brass hat**: i.e. his helmet.

563 **a Thracian**: Athens had made use of Thracian mercenary troops for a good many years. They were normally light infantry, equipped with a small leather shield and a light javelin.

563 **Tereus**: a mythical Thracian king who married Procne, daughter of Pandion king of Athens; after tragic events which culminated in Tereus' being tricked by Procne into eating the flesh of their son Itys, he was ultimately transformed into a hoopoe.

566 **the various countries**: the Greek states alone are meant; no one in the play finds anything objectionable in wars against non-Greeks (cf. 1133, 1247–61).

574–586 In plain language, Lysistrata's recommendations are to purge the citizen body of criminals and self-seeking factions (574–8); to unite all the rest of the free population, including non-citizens and disfranchized citizens, in a well-knit community (579–581); and to admit the people of the 'colonies' (see on 582) to Athenian citizenship (582–5). As is Aristophanes' way literal and allegorical language, words referring to politics and words referring to woolworking, are inextricably mingled throughout the passage.

574–8 The purging of the citizen body is imaged by the preliminary processing of wool fresh from the shearing: it is thoroughly washed, foreign bodies are removed by beating or plucking, and matted portions are disentangled, the ends ('heads') being cut off if necessary.

575 on a bed: cf. 729–732 (spreading out a fleece on a bed to remove moths).

577–8 **those people who combine ... to gain office**: the reference is to political factions and caucuses of all stripes, but in particular to 'the conspiracies which existed in the city for mutual aid in lawsuits and in seeking office' (Thucydides 8.54.4), also known as *hetaireiai* and generally of an anti-democratic tendency, which during most of the first half of 411 were working in concert, on the instructions of Peisander (see on 490), for the overthrow of the constitution (Thucydides loc. cit.).

578 **the heads**: both (i) matted knots of hair-ends in the fleece, whose removal will enable the underlying hairs to be disentangled, and (ii) the leaders of political factions.

579 **union and concord**: lit. 'united goodwill'.

579 **everyone** at this point denotes all *citizens* except those who have been disposed of in 574–8; those previously without citizen rights are brought into the picture from 580 onwards.

580 **immigrants**: Greek *metoikoi,* free non-Athenians permanently settled in Attica or their descendants (who could not become naturalized citizens except by special decree).

580 **any foreigner who's friendly to you**: i.e. persons who were neither citizens by birth nor resident in Attica but who desired, and were thought to deserve, Athenian citizenship.

581 **anyone who's in debt to the treasury**: persons who owed money to the state (e.g. taxes or fines) were deprived of their rights as citizens until the debt was paid. Lysistrata is in effect recommending that these debtors' citizen rights should be restored.

582 **the states which are colonies of this land**: the reference cannot be to the few colonies founded from Athens in historical times (these would not be important enough to merit a climactic position), nor to the cleruchies or overseas settlements of Athenian citizens (these were not 'states' [*poleis*] but outlying portions of the Athenian civic body), but must be to the Ionic-speaking states of Asia Minor and the Aegean, which both in Athenian tradition and in their own were Athenian colonial foundations. Almost all of these states had long been subject-allies of Athens, though many had revolted after the Sicilian disaster; and imperial legislation had required them to participate in Athenian festivals

as colonies participated in the festivals of their mother-city. What is Lysistrata now proposing? By 'bring them together here' she can hardly be suggesting the physical removal of the populations of the allied states to an already overcrowded Athens; rather the 'colonists' are to be 'brought home' by making them Athenian citizens – by uniting the whole Ionian race (or as much of it as was still loyal to Athens) into a single state with a single citizenship. This proposal, which would have made the existing Athenians a minority in their own state, may well have seemed fantastic to Aristophanes' audience in 411; but in the still more desperate days of 405–4 a similar proposal was actually enacted when the people of Samos, the one ally that remained loyal to the end, were declared to be Athenians.

584 **the human flock**: Greek *katagma*, the same word used (in the plural form *katagmata*) for 'flocks of wool' in the previous line; there may be a play on the verb *katagein* 'bring home', encouraging the hearer to think of the Ionians as an Athenian diaspora.

587 **sticks and balls**: referring to 576 'beat out the villains with a stick' and 586 'a great ball of wool'.

590 **open old wounds**: or 'raise grudges from the past'; it does not occur to the Magistrate that this complaint of the women cannot be regarded as belonging to the past while the war continues.

592 **our own position**: i.e. that of *married* women.

593 **I am deeply distressed about the spinsters**: for there was simply no place in Greek society for the adult woman who remained unmarried: her virgin state would exclude her from the world of wives, her age from the world of maidens, and her family would look on her as a failure. When Lysias, cataloguing the crimes of the Thirty, says that they drove many citizens into exile in enemy states, put many unjustly to death and denied them burial, deprived many of their civic rights, and prevented the daughters of many from being married, the last item can be no anticlimax. There does seem after the Sicilian disaster to have been a serious shortage of young citizen men which led to fears that many women might indeed be unable to find husbands, and an attempt was apparently made to solve this problem by a decree which encouraged married men to take citizen women as concubines by enacting that the children of such unions would be treated as legitimate; the historicity of this decree has been doubted, but its text was known to Hieronymus of Rhodes, working at Athens in the mid third century. The decree seems to have been ineffectual; with the very dubious exception of Socrates (whose notorious poverty would surely have made it impossible for him to keep two establishments, and who as a just and honourable man would never have dreamed of committing the ultimate insult to his wife by bringing a mistress into her home) we know of no one who took advantage of it, and it was probably repealed within a few years.

595 **comes home**: i.e. from the war; for 'grey-haired' soldiers.

597 **her**: the Greek pronoun is demonstrative, as if the woman were being singled out as unsuitable (because of her age).

597 **clutching at any straw of an omen**: i.e. taking note of any unusual sight or sound that could possibly be interpreted as an omen signifying that she would soon be married.

601–4 The Magistrate, being deemed (as good as) dead, is now decked out as a corpse would be in preparation for the funeral rites.

601 **a honey-cake**: this is the only surviving reference in Greek literature to honey-cakes being given to the dead.

602 **have a wreath**: wreaths, either of real flowers or leaves or of wax flowers, were very common as funeral adornments. They might be placed on the deceased's head, on his body, or around his bier. Here the wreath is apparently put in the Magistrate's hand with the intention that he should place it on his own head, but he probably does not do so. He may in any case already be wearing a garland as an emblem of office.

604 **tiara**: Greek *stephanos* can denote either a garland (cf. 602) or a metal crown, coronet or tiara. Here a tiara – perhaps of gold – would avoid a repetition of 602 and make something of a climax. Vase-paintings of funeral scenes often show the deceased wearing a metal *stephanos*.

606 **Charon**: the ferryman who transported the souls of the dead across the river or lake of Acheron. He is a ubiquitous figure in funerary art where, however, his passengers seem always to be women, youths or children, never grown men; and it *may* thus be significant that he is mentioned here in connection with the 'death' of a man who has been dressed as a woman.

611 **a full laying-out**: the reference is to the ceremony of *prothesis* when the corpse, clothed and adorned, was laid out on a bed and mourned (especially by the women of the family) with elaborate laments. The omission of this rite would certainly give the soul of the deceased cause for complaint; but in the present case the 'deceased' has refused to lie down!

612 **don't worry ... for sure**: lit. 'but ... at any rate': the Magistrate is assured that he will receive all funeral rites possible in the circumstances.

613 **the third-day offerings**: offerings brought to the tomb on the third day (reckoning inclusively, i.e. the second full day) after death (not, as many have thought, after burial; decisive evidence on this point is provided by the survival of the custom into modern times. No mention is made here of actual burial; like *prothesis* (see on 611), it is impracticable when the 'deceased' stubbornly continues to insist that he is still alive.

615 **let's strip for this action**: the removal of outer garments by the chorus normally occurs when the chorus is about to engage in dancing or other vigorous activity. Here the impression is given (636–7, 661–3, 682–695) that both sides are stripping for a fight; contrariwise the later reclothing of the men (1019–24) is associated with a reconciliation.

619 **the dictatorship of Hippias**: Hippias, son of Peisistratus, was 'tyrant' of Athens from 528–7 to 510, and the last four years of his rule, after the assassination of his brother Hipparchus by Harmodius and Aristogeiton (see on 632–3), were remembered as particularly harsh and despotic. Expelled in 510, he made several attempts to return with Spartan or Persian help, the last in 490 when he landed with the Persians at Marathon. But the public curses against any who aspired 'to become tyrant or to join in restoring the tyrant' and the proclamation of a reward offered to anyone who killed one of the tyrants were still, even in 411, being regularly pronounced on major public occasions, keeping the fear of tyranny alive in the popular mind and enabling politicians to use the word as a stick with which to beat their opponents.

621 **Cleisthenes** was a beardless man, satirized by Aristophanes in all but one of his surviving fifth-century plays as an effeminate and a passive homosexual. He makes an ideal intermediary between the Spartans, notoriously inclined as they were (in Athenian eyes) to homosexuality, and the women, to whose sex he all but belongs himself.

624–5 **the daily pay by which I lived**: the three obols a day paid to jurors. The men continue to use language ('our money') which implies that the women are not really part of the *polis* (cf. 263, 487), but they imagine that the whole contents of the state treasuries are available for distribution to individual citizens like themselves.

627 **about brazen shields**: in the Greek 'shield' is singular, and the phrase may be a quotation from tragedy.

629 **can no more be trusted...**: in 419–8 the Athenian Assembly had officially declared the Spartans to be perjurers (cf. on 513).

629 **ravening**: lit. 'open-mouthed', i.e. hungry and greedy.

632 **'carry my sword in a branch of myrtle'**: a direct quotation of the first line of one version (or stanza) of the famous drinking song (*skolion*) on the 'tyrannicides' Harmodius and Aristogeiton, who killed Hipparchus, the brother of Hippias (see on 619), at the Panathenaea in 514. The stanza runs in full: 'I will carry my sword in a branch of myrtle, like Harmodius and Aristogeiton ...', continuing either '... when amid the sacrifices to Athena they slew the tyrant Hipparchus' (895) or '... when they killed the tyrant and made Athens a land of equal rights' (893); the latter version may have been substituted for the former after the final expulsion of the Peisistratids in 510 . The significance of the 'branch of myrtle' is obscure, and may already have been obscure in Aristophanes' time. It is perhaps least improbable to associate the myrtle-branch with the symposia at which *skolia* were typically sung: singers at symposia, if not accompanying themselves on an instrument, took a myrtle-branch in the hand, and myrtle was also much used for symposiac garlands. Hence the original point of the song may have been: 'Even when I am crowned with myrtle – at a symposium or a festival – I will also carry my sword, ready to perform an act of liberation such as Harmodius and Aristogeiton performed at the Panathenaea.' The line is also, however, capable of an obscene interpretation, the 'sword' being taken as phallic and 'myrtle' denoting, as it often did, the female genitals.

633 **do my shopping in armour**: cf. 555–564.

633 **close beside Aristogeiton**: the reference is to the bronze statues of Harmodius and Aristogeiton, made by Critius and Nesiotes in 411–406 , which stood near the centre of the Agora.

634 **take my stand next to him**: to stand next to Aristogeiton is to assume the role of Harmodius, and it does seem likely that the pose which the old man proceeds to strike is that of the statue of Harmodius as known from reproductions. This is again highly incongruous with his advanced age – Harmodius was young and very handsome and his statue showed him as a beardless youth – and the old man's pretensions are further deflated when he proceeds to threaten, not a deadly stroke of a (non-existent) sword, but a mere punch in the jaw!

637 **old girls**: lit. 'dear old women'.

642 **an Arrephoros**: the Arrephoroi were two girls of noble families, aged between seven and eleven at the start of their service, who lived for a year on the Acropolis under the supervision of the priestess of Athena Polias and performed various ritual duties: they had a role in the Panathenaic procession, and at the festival of the Chalkeia in the autumn they, together with the priestess, began the weaving of the Panathenaic robe (*peplos*) for Athena. Their service reached its climax and conclusion in the ritual of the Arrephoria, probably in the last month of the Athenian year (Skirophorion, approximately equivalent to June), when the priestess gave them boxes containing certain sacred objects, which they carried to an underground sanctuary, bringing back other objects, also concealed, in their stead; after this they returned to their homes and the next year's Arrephoroi took their place.

643 **a Grinder**: Greek *aletris*. According to the scholia 'certain well-born maidens become *aletrides* to the goddess; they grind the cakes for the sacrifices, and this is an honourable office; there are also sacred mills'. The unnamed 'goddess' whom they served was probably Demeter, whose cult at Eleusis is known to have included a whole series of ritual operations connected with the cultivation and processing of corn crops.

643–4 **when I was ten**: the Bear-girls of Brauron had to be 'neither older than ten years nor less than five', and on the analogy of other such expressions defining age-intervals this should mean that the lower and upper limits were the fifth and tenth birthdays, so that if service as a Bear, like service as an Arrephoros, lasted for a year, every girl would be eligible for it just once in her life (since the Brauronia was celebrated once every four years). The vase-paintings showing scenes connected with the Brauronia tend to portray the Bears in a style elsewhere associated with girls of about ten, and it may thus be that although most if not all of the Bears were younger than this, nevertheless ten was thought of as the 'ideal' age for the rite. In fact it must be presumed that a girl could only be a Bear at the 'ideal' age if the Brauronia actually fell on her tenth birthday; and the singer here, who is claiming to have had the fullest and best *cursus honorum* to which an Athenian maiden could aspire, apparently had that good fortune.

644–5 **at the Brauronia** ... **the Foundress's Bears**: the reference is to the *Arkteia*, a girls' *rite de passage* (the sources emphasize its significance as a preparation for marriage, even though marriage for most of the participants was still at least four years away) held at four-yearly intervals at the sanctuary of Artemis at Brauron in eastern Attica, in which the whole Attic-Athenian community participated. In theory every Athenian citizen girl had to have been an *arktos* ('bear') before she could be deemed eligible to marry: but according to another scholium only 'chosen' girls actually took part, being perhaps regarded as representatives of all. The *Arkteia* extended over a considerable period and included a variety of rituals, for many of which, to judge by the vase-paintings, distinct 'uniforms' were worn. It culminated in the festival of the Brauronia.

645 **I shed my saffron gown**: this passage has been made intelligible thanks to the vase-paintings published by Kahil depicting various stages of the *Arkteia*. Some of the girls in these paintings are clothed, others are naked, and almost all the latter seem to be at the upper end of the *Arkteia* age-range. The present passage can therefore be understood to mean that at one point in the ceremonies of the Brauronia the *arktoi* let fall the

saffron gown (*krokōtos*, cf. on 44) which they had been wearing and performed part of the ritual in a state of nudity; after this they may have put on the long, plain *chiton* and *himation* which they are shown wearing in several of the paintings and which were the normal garments of adult women. The reference to this ritual divestment is appropriate in this scene in which, most exceptionally, adult citizen women undress in public. The verb translated 'shed' is *katakhein*, which is used in *Iliad* 5.734 of Athena letting fall her *peplos*.

645 **the Foundress**: Greek *Arkhēgetis* (or its masculine form *Arkhēgetēs*) denotes the divine or heroic founder and patron of a community, society, kin-group, or cult; here therefore it refers to Artemis Brauronia.

646 **a basket-bearer**: a maiden chosen to carry a ritual basket (*kanoun*), containing the knife and other ritual requisites of a sacrifice, in a festal procession, especially at the Panathenaea.

646 **a beautiful girl**: girls chosen as 'basket-bearers' would be those approaching the age for marriage, so that an enemy of a girl's family might try to deprive her of the honour by casting doubt on her virginity; they were probably between twelve and fifteen.

651 **the common wealth**: a fund raised by contributions from all members of a group.

653 **the fund ... from the war with the Medes**: the establishment of a league of 'allied' states paying tribute to Athens is seen, with some oversimplification, as the direct consequence and the deserved reward of Athens' part in the defeat of Xerxes' invasion. But the cash reserve, built up between 478 and 431, had now run low, and revenue had been seriously reduced by the revolt of many allied states.

654 **property-taxes**: Greek *eisphorai*, taxes imposed on personal wealth, usually for war purposes. They were not levied on a regular basis but by special Assembly decree on any occasion when they were thought necessary: our passage is evidence that an *eisphorā* was decreed in 412 (or late 413) but brought in less money than had been expected.

654 **in return**: i.e. to make good the loss.

655 **positively**: lit. 'moreover'.

657 **boot**: Greek *kothornos*, a high, loose, soft boot, fitting either foot equally well, and generally worn by women.

662 **let us take off our tunics**: together with the women's riposte (686), this is the only known place in Old Comedy where the members of a chorus remove *two* garments (cf. on 615). The men will thus be left 'theatrically naked', i.e. wearing only the leotard and tights (with phallus attached) worn by all comic performers under their character costumes.

663 **swathed up like a rissole**: lit. 'enfigleafed', with reference to the popular culinary practice of serving a savoury rissole wrapped in a fig-leaf.

664 **Whitefeet**: Various explanations have been offered of this nickname; the most likely in my view is that 'Whitefeet' are wealthy aristocrats whose feet are always opulently shod and have never become dirty or suntanned. Contrariwise the poor, especially the rural poor, may be called 'dusty-feet'. The men of this chorus are, of course, no aristocrats (cf. 624–5), but as in the case of Harmodius and Aristogeiton (cf. 632–4) the official ideology of democratic Athens had made heroes of the men

who fought *against* the tyranny of Hippias while glossing over the question of what kind of constitution they were fighting *for*.

665 **we who went against Leipsydrium**: Leipsydrium was a place in the hills of northern Attica, probably on a spur of Mount Parnes. Some time after the assassination of Hipparchus in 514 (see on 632), exiled Athenian aristocrats under the leadership of the Alcmeonidae occupied and fortified Leipsydrium, where they were joined by 'some of those in the city', but were besieged and driven out by the forces of Hippias. The phrase '*went against* Leipsydrium' at first sight suggests that the old men are identifying themselves with the besiegers, but elsewhere they are always foes of tyranny (619, 630–4): either, then, they are referring to the original (unopposed) occupation of Leipsydrium by the rebels, or else they or Aristophanes have got their history confused. For the old men's claim to have taken part in events now a century old cf. on 281.

673 **there's no work ... their assiduous hands**: lit. 'they will leave nothing undone of assiduous hand-work'. The surface reference is to crafts such as carpentry (and hence shipbuilding, instanced in the next line); but *kheirourgiā* 'hand-work' can denote manual stimulation of the male organ, which *hetaerae* were expected to perform for clients who needed it. Here, as in the following lines, there is thus an implied fear that these newly assertive *citizen* women will take the initiative – and take command – in sexual relations; cf. 772–3.

675 **to attack us with them and ram us**: lit. 'to fight naval battles and sail against us'; but these verbs can also be used of the active partner in a sexual encounter.

675 **Artemisia**: queen of Halicarnassus, commanded the contingent from her city and the neighbouring islands in Xerxes' invasion fleet in 480; she fought with distinction in the battle of Salamis.

676 **horsemanship** in connection with women automatically suggested the 'equestrian' coital position (see on 60). Actual horse-riding was in Greek eyes perhaps the most unwomanly of all unwomanly activities.

678 **look at the Amazons**: the most famous Athenian legend concerning these fabled female warriors told how they invaded Attica in an attempt to rescue an Amazon princess who had been captured by Heracles and awarded to his ally Theseus as a prize of valour. The Amazons camped on the Areopagus and besieged Theseus and the Athenians on the Acropolis, but were defeated in a great battle and utterly annihilated.

679 **Micon**, son of Phanomachus, was a noted painter and sculptor who flourished in the second quarter of the fifth century. He made a statue commemorating an Olympic victory by the Athenian Callias in 472, but his most famous works were paintings adorning two of the great buildings of this period, the Painted Portico (*Stoa Poikilē*, originally called the Peisianacteum) (Pausaniaus 1.15) and the Theseum (Pausanias 1.17). Both these buildings had paintings showing the battle between the Athenians and the Amazons; it is not known for certain which of these was by Micon, but it is not unlikely that both were.

680–1 **fit it through a hole in a wooden board**: i.e. confine them in the stocks.

683 **the wild sow within me**: the boar often symbolizes rage in Aristophanes and elsewhere.

685 **I'll shear your fleece**: i.e. I'll tear out your (white) hair (cf. 448).

686 **let us also quickly undress**: the women too will now be 'theatrically naked' (cf. on 662) – something as unheard-of for a respectable Athenian matron as it was commonplace in the case of men (and *hetaerae*). And yet there had been one time in these women's lives when public nudity had been a religious duty (cf. on 645); perhaps on this occasion too their divestment is in a holy cause. They will put on their clothes again at some point between 829 and 1013, perhaps during 889–951 when the audience's attention is concentrated on Cinesias and Myrrhine and the chorus are dramatically non-existent.

688–690 **never again to eat garlic or black beans**: i.e. to have his teeth knocked out.

694–5 **I'll midwife you as the beetle did the breeding eagle**: the allusion is to a celebrated Aesopic fable. An eagle once wronged a beetle, either by stealing its young, or by killing a hare which had supplicated the beetle for protection; in revenge the beetle pursued the eagle wherever it nested, rolling its eggs out and breaking them (this was its unwelcome 'midwifery') until the eagle sought sanctuary (unavailingly) in the bosom of Zeus. Thus the women's meaning is 'I'll smash your eggs'; and despite the lack of an exact parallel, there can be little doubt that the men's 'eggs' are their testicles.

697 **girl**: implies not that the Theban is unmarried, or even particularly young, but that the speaker is fond of her; likewise in 701 and 702.

697 **Ismenia**: a name thought of as typically Theban, derived from the river Ismenus which flowed past Thebes. The woman had not been named when she was present on stage (85 ff).

698 **you'll have no power**: sc. to coerce us or thwart our will; they are thinking of the likely effect of the sexual strike (in which Spartans, Thebans and others are co-operating – whereas the occupation of the Acropolis, which has dominated the action since 245, is a purely Athenian affair).

699 **our neighbours**: Athens had enemies (Megara and the Boeotian confederation) on both her land borders.

700–1 **the girls**: i.e. my women friends (cf. 697).

700–1 **in honour of Hecate**: Hecate had traditional associations with the birth and rearing of children and in Aristophanes' time was a favourite goddess with women, as evidenced by the frequency with which they (and they alone) swear by her. There was at this date nothing inherently sinister about Hecate, though like other deities she could dispense evil as well as good.

703 **they**: i.e. the Boeotians.

703 **your decrees**: the reference must be to decrees forbidding trade with the enemy and authorising the confiscation of contraband goods and the prosecution of those dealing in them.

705 **to have your neck broken**: by being hurled from a cliff.

707 **cross-visaged**: cf. on 7–8.

707 **from thy halls**: not appropriate to the actual situation, but Lysistrata is being addressed as if she were a tragic character, and in tragedy the stage-house most often represented a palace.

712–4 **Speak to thy friends … do not hide from me the ill we suffer**: a tragic cliché.

720 **opening up the hole**: i.e. clearing away stones, earth or rubbish covering a cleft in the rock; but there is a *double entendre,* since the Greek could equally well mean 'opening up *her* hole', i.e. engaging in self-stimulatory activity.

721 **Pan's Grotto**: a cave-sanctuary under the north face of the Acropolis near its west end, founded after the battle of Marathon. It had erotic associations as being the place where Creusa was raped by Apollo and conceived Ion, the ancestor of the Ionian peoples.

722 **on a pulley-cable**: this implies that building work was in progress on the Acropolis early in 411 – possibly on the temple of Athena now called the Erechtheum (we know that work on this had been at a standstill for some time in summer 409 but we do not know when it had come to a halt), possibly on some other project.

723–5 **yesterday**: this is the first clear indication that the choral scene 614–705 is to be regarded as having covered a substantial lapse of time; in 881 we learn that it is the sixth day since the wives left home (counting the actual day of their secession as the first). A further time-lapse must be assumed between 1013 and 1072 to allow for the Herald to return to Sparta and for a peace delegation to be appointed and to reach Athens.

723–5 **I pulled down by her hair**: Lysistrata caught the deserter just at the moment of 'take-off'.

723–5 **on the back of a sparrow**: sparrows had strong erotic associations: they were sacred to Aphrodite and were reputed to have a very powerful sexual appetite and their meat to have aphrodisiac qualities. Some vase-paintings show women or satyrs riding on birds whose head ends are shaped like phalli.

723–5 **Orsilochus**: according to the scholia this man was (1) a brothel-keeper, (2) an adulterer, (3) satirized in comedy for effeminacy. (1) and (2) are (intelligent) guesses based on the text, but can hardly both be correct; (3), though at first sight surprising given the context, is stated in a form that suggests direct or indirect acquaintance with other references to Orsilochus in comedy, and should be accepted. Since it was quite possible for the same man to be accused both of excessive promiscuity with women and of being a passive homosexual and since most men accused of adultery, and most effeminates satirized in comedy, were citizens while most brothel-keepers were not, it is likely that (2) and (3) are right and (1) is wrong, and that Orsilochus was a man who'made a profession of seduction' – or at least had the reputation of being such a man. Normally in Greek society the adulterous wife stayed at home and her lover came clandestinely to her; but *this* woman is desperate enough to want to go to the man's house.

729 **Milesian fleeces** were noted for their soft, luxurious quality and will have been among the most expensive kinds of wool.

732 **spreading them**: does she mean the fleeces, or her legs?

739–740 **strip it bare … no stripping bare**: Greek *apoderein* can mean either (i) to remove the skin of an animal or the bark of a plant (properly by beating or flaying) or (ii) to cause the retraction of a man's foreskin by sexual stimulation.

742 **Hileithya**: the goddess of childbirth.

743 **a non-holy place**: birth and death were taboo in sanctuaries, and the Acropolis consisted entirely of sanctuaries.

751 **the sacred helmet**: a bronze helmet which is spoken of as *the* sacred helmet *par excellence* can only be the helmet from Pheidias' great bronze statue of Athena (called by modern writers the Athena Promachos) which stood in the open air on the Acropolis. Thus the helmet which Lysistrata now displays must be of superhuman dimensions.

754–5 **I could go inside ... like a pigeon**: i.e. she would 'nest' in the great hollow of the upturned helmet. Her reasoning is that if she turned herself, so to speak, into a bird, she could give birth on the Acropolis without any violation of divine law: birds and beasts notoriously ignored the prohibitions of birth, copulation and death in sanctuaries without suffering any untoward consequences.

757 **its hearth ceremony**: a ceremony performed (probably) on the fifth day of a baby's life, in which (1) the child was carried at a run round the hearth of the house, (2) the women who had taken part in the delivery 'cleansed their hands' and ceased to be polluted, (3) friends and relations sent presents, 'especially squid and octopus', and (4) these cephalopods then formed the *pièce de résistance* of a feast.

759 **the guardian serpent**: 'the Athenians say that a great serpent, the guardian of the Acropolis, dwells in the temple [of Athena Polias] ... and, as if it really existed, they set before it a monthly offering, namely a honey-cake' (Herodotus 8.41.2). At the time of the Persian invasion in 480 the honey-cake, which till then had always been consumed, was found untouched, and this encouraged the Athenians to evacuate their city 'because the goddess herself had quitted the Acropolis' (Herodotus 8.41.3); but Herodotus himself clearly did not believe in the serpent's existence, and his account implies that the only evidence of its presence was the consumption of the honey-cake – no one, not even the priestess, ever claimed to have *seen* it. Hence the Third Woman's story is absurd, unless indeed she is referring to a dream.

760 **fourth woman**: I assume that a fifth actor spoke here as in 136 and 447–8; but it is possible that the First or Second Woman, inspired by the example of the Third, produces a fresh excuse for not returning to the Acropolis.

760 **the owls**: the rocky citadels of Greece were (and are) a favourite haunt of the little owl (*Athene noctua*), which had thus from very early times been the sacred bird of the citadel-goddess Athena (Polias), and which became an emblem of Athens.

761 **honking**: the Greek verb is an onomatopoeic one derived from the owl's call phoneticized as *kikkabau*.

762 **my dear ladies**: Lysistrata is trying to be diplomatic with her wavering comrades.

770–1 **the swallows ... fleeing the hoopoes' pursuit**: there is an allusion to the myth of Tereus (cf. on 563). When Tereus was transformed into a hoopoe, his wife Procne became a nightingale and her sister Philomela a swallow; and Tereus in his new guise continues to pursue Procne eternally.

771 **phallicity**: the Greek has the plural of the noun *phalēs,* a poetic synonym of *phallos.*

785 **Melanion**, son of Amphidamas, was certainly a famous hunter in the wilds of Arcadia, but the best-known story about him is radically incompatible with that told here. Far from being one who 'fled from marriage' he accepted the challenge set by the huntress maiden Atalanta, who required her suitors to run a race against her, on pain of death if they were beaten; it was Atalanta who was 'fleeing from marriage', for she had set this test in the confident belief that no man could pass it. Melanion won the race, and Atalanta, by throwing down the golden apples of Aphrodite, which she stopped to pick up.

798 **you won't be eating onion any more**: sc. because if you do, you needn't expect a kiss.

800 **a thick bush**: since the men are naked (see on 662), the hair referred to, which is revealed only when they raise a leg, must be behind, not above, the genitals, as 'hairy-arsed' confirms.

801 **Myronides**, son of Callias was an outstanding Athenian general between the 470s and the 450s. He first appears in our sources in 479, when he was an ambassador to Sparta and one of the generals at the battle of Plataea. In 460 or 459 he led a scratch force of under- and over-age troops in a successful campaign in the Megarid (Thucydides 1.105.4–106); in 457 he defeated the Boeotians at Oenophyta and occupied Boeotia and Phocis (Thucydides 1.108.2–3). Twenty years after *Lysistrata* his name still symbolized the days of Athens' greatest power.

802–3 **hairy-arsed**: i.e. virile, strong and valiant (like Heracles).

804 **Phormio**, son of Asopius, probably of the deme Paeania, was an outstandingly successful Athenian admiral in the early years of the Peloponnesian War, winning more than one victory against heavy numerical odds (Thucydides 2.83–92); he probably died in spring 428 (Thucydides 2.103, 3.7.1). Comedy portrays him as a tough and hardy fighter.

808 **Timon**: the archetypal misanthrope. He was later believed to have been an actual Athenian of the fifth century; but no known passage of comedy refers to him as a contemporary and it is likely that he was a legendary figure (and in that sense belonged to the same category as Melanion). His name, at any rate, had become by 414 (*Birds* 1549) a byword for hatred of all mankind and for the life of a recluse. But there is no justification for the women's claim that he hated only men and was friendly towards women; on the contrary, a prominent element in his traditional character was hatred of women and rejection of marriage.

809–811 **whose countenance was hemmed round with impassable briers**: the primary meaning is that Timon had thick matted hair and beard, but the words may also suggest the 'prickly' fierceness of Timon's temper and/or the inaccessibility of his place of abode.

812 **a scion of the Furies** (Greek *Erīnyes):* the Erinyes were thought of as holding no converse with gods or men, and Timon's unkempt hair is reminiscent of the snake-entwined hair of theatrical Erinyes.

816 **wicked men**: it is not made clear whether Timon thought (or whether the women think) that *all* men are wicked, or whether the wickedness of some men disgusted him with mankind in general. Later in the play we

shall find that the women consider men wicked if, and so long as, they are hostile to women (1017, 1035) and refuse to make peace (1160).

823 **shall I give you one with my leg, then?**: unlike the men (799–800), the women do not *actually* raise a leg (note the future 'you'll be showing' in 824 and the potential 'you wouldn't see' in 825–6).

824 **man-bag**: i.e. vulva. Even a naked woman (unlike a naked man) is still, in a normal standing pose, concealing something vital.

827–8 **singed clean with the lamp**: just as the men's 'hairy-arsedness' (802–3) emphasizes their virility (at least in their own eyes), so the women's artificially maintained smoothness in the same region emphasizes their femininity.

830 **calonice**: there is no real evidence for the identity of this woman, whose few short remarks are devoid of any indication of personality; but the choice of Myrrhine as the name of Cinesias' wife, and the references to Lampito at 696 and 998, show that Aristophanes did not intend the characters of the opening scenes to be totally forgotten. If neither Calonice nor Myrrhine has appeared since 253, it is because Lysistrata's associates in 439–613 come from a different division of her army (see on 439) and because it would not have been appropriate for Myrrhine to appear in 706–780 as one of the women whose desperate craving for sexual satisfaction drives them to desert Lysistrata's cause, when in the scene now to come she will be as much in command of her sexual impulses as her husband is the slave of his.

832 **the secret rites of Aphrodite**: cf. 898.

833–4 **mistress of Cyprus and Cythera and Paphos**: for Cyprus, and particularly Paphos, as homes of Aphrodite and her cult. The island of Cythēra off the south-east tip of the Peloponnese, had a notable temple of Aphrodite, and was said to have been her first landfall after her birth from the sea and the source of her byname Cythreia.

834 **go on up ... begun to tread**: that men are beginning to be 'half crazed' by the effects of the women's sex-strike is evidence that Aphrodite is working to assist them; she is now asked to continue and complete this work.

835 **the shrine of Chloe**: Demeter Chloe (the goddess of green things, especially no doubt green corn-shoots) had a sanctuary close under the Acropolis, a little way south of the Propylaea (and hence to the left of an observer looking out).

838 **Cinesias**: a name chosen for its connection with the verb *kīnein*, one of whose meanings is 'copulate with (a woman)'. There is no evidence that the character was meant as a portrayal of any actual contemporary.

839 **roast him**: i.e. inflame him with passion.

841 **except – you and our cup know what**: i.e. the things from which the women swore to abstain in the oath taken over the cup of wine (194–239).

846 **the wheel** was an especially severe form of torture; the references, though laconic, suggest that the victim was bound, face upwards, to the broad rim of a fixed wheel, and his extended limbs pulled downwards with cords – a variant on the principle of the rack.

847 **within the perimeter**: lit. 'within the guards'; Lysistrata speaks as if the Acropolis were a military camp guarded by an outer and inner ring of sentries; Cinesias has penetrated the outer ring undetected, and she as one of the inner ring now challenges him.

849 **I'm daytime sentry**: Cinesias is unaware that he is speaking to the leader of the rebellious women; he is thus not surprised when the 'sentry' apparently proves to be corruptible (861).

852 **from Bangwell**: lit. 'of Paeonidae', a deme in northern Attica, in whose territory Leipsydrium lay (see on 665); but Aristophanes has assigned Cinesias to this deme merely because of its name, which suggests the verb *paiein* 'strike, knock, copulate with' (cf. on 838).

856–7 **she says 'Let this be for Cinesias'**: the usual expression for toasting one's absent beloved. But only here, so far as I can tell, do we hear of toasts being pledged over *food* rather than drink. Does Lysistrata fear that it might cool Cinesias' ardour if he were given the impression that his wife was a habitual drinker?

857 **Oh, in the gods' name** –: it appears that he was going to continue 'call her out here now'; but Lysistrata wants to increase his passion and his impatience yet further.

861 **Are you going to give me something?**: the 'sentry', having been asked to commit a breach of duty, naturally expects to be paid for taking the risk: at least this is how it will seem to Cinesias, and he further supposes that the coin in which this particular sentry would most like to be paid is that of sexual gratification.

879 **Mummy, mummy, mummy**: No doubt the 'child' was in fact, for theatrical convenience, a dummy, the voice being that of the Cinesias actor, suitably disguised; for the child's supposed age, see next note.

881 **hasn't had ... a suck**: we need not suppose that the child had actually been allowed to go hungry for so long; since he can say a word or two, we should probably imagine him as between one and two years old, and at that age a child would normally be on a mixed diet of breast milk and specially prepared solids or semi-solids fed to it by hand.

881 **for six days now**: the period is reckoned inclusively (if the day Myrrhine left home was Day 1, it is now Day 6); see on 723–5.

894–5 **your property and mine**: Cinesias regards (or professes to regard) all the possessions of his household as jointly owned by himself and his wife.

898 **you haven't celebrated the secret rites of Aphrodite**: cf. 832. Here the expression insinuates that Myrrhine is neglecting a duty owned (not to her husband but) to the gods.

900 **you men**: here for the first time the women's 'you' seems to include Spartan as well as Athenian males: the sex-strike, unlike the occupation of the Acropolis, is designed to coerce *both* sides in the war, and we shall soon (980) begin to see its effect at Sparta.

901 **if that's what's decided**: Cinesias obviously cannot commit the whole Athenian people (not to mention the Spartans); but he could at least have said that he himself would speak and vote in favour of peace. His failure to say this is deliberate, as his evasive answer at 951 proves.

906 **Myrrie babe**: Greek *Myrrion*, an affectionate diminutive which, unusually, is based on an abbreviated form of the person's name.

907 **in front of the little one**: to make love in the presence of others was to treat the woman as a whore, and our passage shows that it was proper for a wife to object to the presence even of a small infant. It is therefore all the more remarkable that Myrrhine takes no notice whatever of the presence of the chorus.

908 **Manes**: a common name in western Asia Minor, much used in Greece for male slaves of Asiatic origin. One would have expected the infant to be in the charge of a nurse rather than of a male attendant; but that would violate one of the fundamental structural principles of the play – that every female who appears is on Lysistrata's side, and every male is (at first) opposed to her. Even the baby is carefully and (it might seem) unnecessarily specified as male by the use of a masculine pronoun at 878 (so the Greek; English idiom makes it impossible to reproduce the pronoun there in the translation, and it has been introduced at 882 instead).

911 **Pan's Grotto**: see on 721.

912 **I wouldn't be pure any more**: it was a universal Greek rule that after sexual intercourse both men and women were forbidden to enter sanctuaries until they had bathed.

913 **the Clepsydra**: a spring (in Aristophanes' time it was enclosed in a fountain-house) in a cave under the north-west angle of the Acropolis, between Pan's Grotto and the Propylaea.

917 **by Apollo**: normally a men's oath.

918 **the sort of man you are**: viz. a bad husband and father (cf. 882, 889). Throughout the next thirty-odd lines Myrrhine pretends to be extremely solicitous for Cinesias' welfare and comfort, but her real object remains to 'roast him' (839).

921 **a mattress**: strictly 'a rush-mat', which was laid over the bed-cords and over which, in turn, the bedclothes were spread.

928 **Do you think ... serving it this slow?**: lit. 'Is this prick being entertained like Heracles?' In comedy Heracles is regularly portrayed as a glutton, and it seems that he was often shown in ravenous anticipation of a lavish meal which he was given tardily or not at all.

929 **Have I got everything now?**: the sentence might also be taken as a statement ('Now I've got everything'); but to take it as a question accounts better for Cinesias' reply – hearing Myrrhine ask herself this question, he is alarmed lest she may think of something else that is missing and so cause further delay, and therefore hastily answers her question for her.

931 **I'm undoing my breastband**: this statement gives us the key to Myrrhine's disrobing sequence. A woman's dressing sequence is (1) step into garment, (2) fasten belt round it at waist, (3) put on breastband (4) bring garment up over upper body and fasten at shoulders; the undressing sequence is the reverse of this. Hence Myrrhine's clothing is at this stage unfastened at the shoulders but still belted at the waist – and indeed, so far as the text informs us, she never makes any further progress with removing it.

932 **that business of the settlement**: cf. 900–1.

933 **a blanket**: Greek *sisurā*, properly a cloak made of goatskin or sheepskin with the hair or fleece left on, used as a garment mainly by countrymen but as a blanket by all classes.

942 **this scent isn't a nice one**: Cinesias wants to avoid the delay involved in anointing himself; but all he gets is further delay as Myrrhine pretends to suppose he would prefer a different kind of scent.

944 **the Rhodian scent**: the scent made at Rhodes, with saffron as its main ingredient, was later famous, but was apparently considered second-rate in Aristophanes' time.

947 **thingy**: Greek *alabastos*, a slender cylindrical vessel four to eight inches long; the word *alabastos* could also mean 'penis'.

949 **by Artemis**: if Cinesias were alert, he might think this an odd moment for Myrrhine to swear by a goddess associated with chastity.

951 **I'll think about it**: a blatant attempt at evasion, committing him to nothing.

953 **skinning my cock**: see on 158 and on 739–740 (ii).

956 **How shall I satisfy this infant's needs?**: he seems rather more concerned for the welfare of this phallic 'infant' than of his actual child: the latter 'hasn't had a bath or a suck for six days' (881), but it is for the former that he is anxious to hire a 'nursemaid' (lit. 'wet-nurse').

957 **Mr. Fox-dog**: the nickname of one Philostratus. Our passage implies that he was a pimp, and he painted his face. The nickname compendiously portrays him as having the cunning of a fox and the shamelessness of a dog.

958 **a nursemaid**: i.e. a woman who will satisfy the needs of this particular kind of 'infant'.

962 **what kidney**: the pain experienced by the sex-starved young male is thought of as extending all the way from the testicles to the lumbar region of the back in which the kidneys are situated.

978–9 **all of a sudden ... my peeled prick**: a surprise for 'be dashed in pieces' or the like: Cinesias hates Myrrhine for what she has done to him, but he also desires her as much as ever.

980 **the Senate**: 'body of elders', the principal deliberative body in the Spartan state, comprising thirty members all of whom (except for the two kings) had to be over sixty years old. The herald uses the terminology with which he is familiar.

981 **the Presidium**: the members of the business committee of the *boulē*, which held office for one-tenth of the year and was composed of all the fifty councillors from one of the ten tribes. All heralds, ambassadors and official messengers from abroad, upon arriving at Athens, were expected to address themselves in the first place to this committee.

982 **a phallic demon**: Greek *Konīsalos*, originally perhaps the name of a dance associated with ithyphallic satyrs; at Athens personified as a minor divinity.

985 **a spear hidden in your clothes**: lit. 'a spear under your armpit'. Under the armpit was a convenient place to conceal something one had stolen or a secretly carried dagger; so 'to have a dagger under one's armpit' could mean 'to conceal treacherous intentions behind a friendly façade'. Cinesias is playing on the literal and figurative senses of the phrase: if the object that is under the herald's clothes is really being gripped in his armpit, it can be no more dagger but must be a spear! For Athenian fear of Spartan duplicity cf. on 629.

987 **got swellings in the groin from your journey ...?**: such swellings (Greek *boubōnes*) seem to have been a frequent consequence of infection getting into an inadequately cleaned cut or abrasion in the foot or leg, such as might only too easily be sustained in the course of a long journey on foot over 'roads' that were little but tracks.

991 **a Spartan walking-stick**: Spartans, and people in Athens or elsewhere who aped Spartan ways, used a distinctive type of walking-stick with a knobbed or twisted end.

995 **has risen up as one man**: lit. 'is upright'; often used to refer to a state of public tension and excitement – and is often used to refer to a penile erection.

996 **are standing absolutely firm**: Greek *estūkanti* have erections.

998 **Was it Pan?**: Pan, who 'embodies the uncivilized power of procreation', is frequently portrayed as ithyphallic; hence this particular 'affliction' might very plausibly be ascribed to his influence. So essentially erotic a god was Pan that one of his regular epithets in later poetry was 'mounter of she-goats'.

1000 **as if a starting-gate had fallen**: lit. 'as if from one starting-gate', i.e. like runners in a race who all start off at the same instant.

1003 **like men carrying lamps**: a man carrying an oil lamp will bend his body over it to protect it from the wind.

1004 **their little berries**: Greek *murton* 'myrtle-berry', i.e. clitoris.

1010 **with full powers**: a stipulation necessary for the plot of the play, which could not tolerate the delay involved in referring terms of peace back to the Spartan assembly for ratification; but to invest one's ambassadors with 'full powers' could also in real life be a way of encouraging the other side to make an agreement in the confidence that it would not be repudiated when the ambassadors returned home. A Spartan embassy to Athens in 420 proved a diplomatic disaster largely because the ambassadors, having told the Council that they were plenipotentiaries, afterwards told the Assembly that they were not (Thucydides 5.44–46).

1012 **I'll present this prick of mine to the Council**: a play on the language of Athenian legislation, in which an expert, or a committee, was sometimes instructed to draft a decree and present it (*epideixai*) to the Council for them to approve and submit to the Assembly. Cinesias will have no need to present the Council with a written document; all he will have to do is display (also *epideixai*) his phallus!

1012 **another set of delegates from Athens**: this phraseology, and especially the word *presbeis* 'delegates, ambassadors', strongly suggests that the peace conference is to be held on neutral ground. And so, in an important sense, it will be: the Acropolis belongs to Athena (cf. on 263) who is presented as being the Spartans' goddess as much as the Athenians' (cf. 1299, 1320–1), and Lysistrata, though an Athenian, acts as an impartial president, reproaching both sides equally for their folly and ingratitude (1128–60), urging both to make concessions (1161–72), and speaking distantly of 'the Athenians', 'these Athenians', 'you Athenians', as if she were not one herself (1120, 1139, 1145, 1149). Neither side has defeated the other, and neither is suing the other for peace; it might rather be said that both sides are desperate to make peace in order to be able to sue Lysistrata for the restoration of normal sexual

activity, having been defeated by the women in a war fought with erotic weapons.

1015 **leopard**: often associated with lions, boars, etc., as typifying fierce, unquenchable courage.

1019 **any time you like**: i.e. my offer to become 'your firm friend' remains open and may be taken up whenever you wish.

1020 **a ridiculous sight**: the Greek cult of male nudity applied only to men in their prime; for an old man to be seen naked, even when dead, was a disgrace.

1022–3 **bad**: the same Greek adjective *ponēros* appears also in 1017 (where it has been rendered as you silly fool) and in 1035 (naughty), both times applied to the men, just as here the men speak of themselves as 'bad' and of the women as 'not bad'.

1024 **you look like a man**: paradoxical, since when they originally removed their tunics it was because, in their words, 'a man ought to smell like a man' (663); but the truth is (cf. on 1020) that only clothing can make an old man look like 'a man' in the sense of a person worthy of respect.

1027 **here's a ring**: the lower eyelid will be pulled downwards and the ring used to sweep the insect out of the eye.

1032 **a real mighty Tricorythus gnat**: Tricory(n)thus was a deme near Marathon (close to the modern Kato Souli); it adjoined the great marsh at the northern end of Marathon Bay, where gnats and mosquitoes will certainly have abounded.

1034 **my tears are flowing like anything**: perhaps for emotional as well as physiological reasons but the old man isn't going to admit it.

1039 **neither with ... nor without the deadly pests** sc. can one live happily.

1040 **I now make peace with you**: the precursor of a more important peace treaty to come.

1044–5 **to say anything slanderous**: choral interludes in the latter part of an Old Comedy were often devoted to satire on individuals.

1050 **let every man and woman notify us**: perhaps the only passage in all of surviving Greek comedy where the presence of women in the audience is explicitly acknowledged. The women in question (who are assumed, it will be observed, to be financially their own mistresses) need not have been of citizen status.

1052 **two or three minas**: i.e. 200–300 drachmas, enough to support a family for the better part of a year.

1054 **we've got purses for it**: not only will we give you money, we'll even give you a free purse to put it in!

1055 **if ever peace makes its appearance**: this must refer not to the world in which the play's action takes place, and in which peace is plainly very close at hand, but to the real world outside the play, in which peace must have seemed a very remote prospect; such an extra-dramatic reference has been prepared for by 1043–9 in which the chorus spoke not as persons in a drama but as Athenians performing before their fellow-citizens at a festival.

1056 **takes out a loan**: the first indication that the money is not being offered as a gift.

1057 **will no longer have to repay it**: the mirage of a free handout has faded; repayment of the loan will only be cancelled if it is still outstanding when the war at long last ends; and nothing is said about remitting the interest that will have accrued up to that date.

1057 **If he's had it**: ... which reveal that the chorus are not really offering to pay out any money at all (nor indeed have they at any point explicitly said they would do so).

1059 **visitors from Carystus**: no doubt the reference is to a contingent of troops sent to Athens by this allied state in southern Euboea; they were still at Athens in the following summer, when 300 of them were persuaded to lend their armed support to the *coup d'état* of the Four Hundred (Thucydides 8.69.3).

1059–60 **fine upstanding men**: Greek *kaloi te kāgathoi*, a term of high commendation that may refer to birth, wealth and education, or to physical and moral excellence, or to a combination of both.

1061–4 **there's a special pea-soup ... lovely tender meat**: several expressions here are ambiguous in such a way as strongly to suggest that the flesh of the human female will be as important a part of the evening's entertainment as the flesh of the pig: *delphakion* 'young porker' can denote the female genitals; *etnos* 'pea-soup' can refer to vaginal secretion, suggesting that cunnilingus will be one of the options on offer; and *hapalos* 'tender' is a common epithet both of women's flesh and of appetizing meat.

1063 **I've sacrificed it**: so far as the larger domestic animals (cattle, sheep, pigs, goats) were concerned, slaughter and sacrifice were virtually synonymous.

1063–4 **it's getting to be lovely tender meat**: i.e. it is being cooked and nearly ready to be served.

1072 **trailing long beards**: cf. on 279–280.

1073 **a sort of pig-pen**: the Spartans' clothes, distended by their erect phalli, look as though they had concealed beneath them one of the portable wicker pens in which young pigs were sometimes kept in the courtyards of Athenian houses.

1075 **how we find you faring**: lit. 'in what condition you have come', a polite inquiry about the delegates' health; but the delegates themselves are entirely preoccupied with the condition of one organ only.

1082 **indigenous gentlemen**: Greek *autokhthones,* an Athenian self-designation embodying the claim that the Athenians had not, like most Greek peoples, migrated to their country from elsewhere but had sprung from its soil – a superiority which has not however saved them now from being reduced to the same undignified condition as the rest of male Greece.

1083 **in the attitude of wrestling men**: the reference is to the wrestler's preliminary stance, in which he would lean slightly forward and thrust out his hands in front of him. The Athenian delegates are walking in this posture in order to hold their cloaks clear of the ends of their phalli and thus conceal all evidence of their embarrassing erections; but the result is

that they appear to be suffering from gross swelling of the abdomen (see next note).

1085 **arth...letic**: the Greek has *askētikon* 'connected with athletic training', with a pun on *askitikon* 'of the nature of dropsy' (a build-up of fluid in the abdominal cavity).

1086 **Lysistrata**: Athenian etiquette normally forbade a free man to refer by name in public to a respectable living woman: the naming of Lysistrata here and in 1103, 1147 implies that she is no ordinary woman.

1088 **this malady** is that afflicting the Athenians; **the other one here** is that of the Spartans. The chorus-leader is standing between the two delegations, who do not take notice of each other's presence until 1097.

1089 **in the early hours**: cf. 60, 966.

1091 **reconcile us**: it is not clear (and probably was not meant to be) whether the pronoun refers to men and women, or to Athenians and Spartans (cf. on 1097–8): the latter reconciliation is a necessary and sufficient precondition of the former.

1092 **we shall be fucking Cleisthenes**: the only reference in the play to any of the many alternative sexual outlets which in reality were available to the Athenian husband denied his conjugal rights. The existence of these alternatives had to be ignored if the idea of a sex-strike by wives was to be credible even as fantasy; and even when one of them is now glanced at for the sake of a joke at the expense of Cleisthenes (for whom see on 621), it is mentioned in such a way as to suggest that to be reduced to taking *him* as a sexual partner is a fate almost too terrible to contemplate. Other possibilities much less unattractive continue to be ignored.

1093 **pick up** (lit. 'take') shows that the Athenians, and probably the Spartans too, had not merely lifted up, or partly undraped, their cloaks in order to reveal their phalli, but had taken them off and dropped them on the ground, as the choruses had done in 614–705 (cf. 637).

1094 **the Hermclipper family**: those who had been responsible, in 415, for the mutilation of the phalli of the pillar-images of Hermes in the streets of Athens: it is assumed that some of them, having escaped detection, are still in Athens, and (jocularly) that they have got into the habit of knocking off any erect phallus they see.

1095–6 **yes, absolutely**: it is not clear whether the chorus-leader's advice (1093–4) was actually addressed to the Spartans as well as the Athenians; but even if it was not, the Spartans have heard it, and they act on it without more ado.

1097–8 **we have had a nasty time ... we've been having a dangerous time**: there is no contrast between the Athenian's 'we' and the Spartan's 'we' (the Greek text has merely two first-person-plural verbs without any subject pronouns) and it appears that they both mean simply we men: their very first words to each other betray an awareness of a bond between them that is stronger than their long-standing enmity.

1099 **those men**: he means the 'Hermclipper family' (1094).

1099 **worked up**: the Spartan presumably means no more than 'with erections'.

1105 **and summon Lysistratus too if you like**: if this reading (which was the text known to the scholiast) is correct, the Spartan seems to be saying in effect 'summon anybody, no matter whether male or female, who will be able to "disband the armies"' (the literal meaning of the name Lysistrata/Lysistratus).

1113 **they're eager for it**: the primary meaning is that the men are eager for a settlement; but Greek *orgān* can also mean 'be on heat or in rut, be intensely desirous of sexual release' – which the men certainly also are; cf. next note.

1113 **aren't trying to take advantage of one another**: lit. 'aren't trying one another out', which might refer (i) to diplomatic sparrings in which each side was seeking to discover the other's weak spots or (ii) to homosexual experimentation (cf. 1092).

1114 **Reconciliation**: Frequently towards the end of an Aristophanic comedy the hero, or some other male character, acquires possession of one or more highly desirable females. Here (cf. 1158–70) it is certain, and in most of the other passages cited it is probable, that the girl(s) appeared nude (i.e. that they were impersonated by men wearing appropriately designed bodysuits and padding). Here, exceptionally, the girl is merely held before the men as 'bait' to keep their arousal and their frustration at the highest pitch so that they will remain desperately eager for peace at almost any price.

1117 **in the stupid way that our menfolk used to do it**: this probably refers (cf. 1231–5) to an alleged Athenian lack of tact or finesse in past negotiations with Sparta.

1119 **lead him by the tool**: while this would be agreeable physically for the man so treated, it would also be undignified (and even dangerous, if we recall 1093–9); I therefore assume that as soon as it is proposed the chief Spartan delegate avoids it by giving Reconciliation his hand after all.

1127 **I am not badly educated**: this will prove to mean in effect 'I know a good deal about the religious institutions of the Greek world (1129–32) and about the history of the last hundred years (1137–56)'.

1129–32 **at Olympia**: at the quadrennial Olympic games.

1129–32 **at the Gates**: 'the Gates' (Pylae) was the local name for the pass known to most Greeks, and to history, as Thermopylae. To the west of the pass, near the village of Anthela, there was a sanctuary of Demeter, where twice a year the Amphictyonic council, consisting of delegates representing twelve branches of the Greek people (Athens and Sparta being included in the Ionian and Dorian branches respectively), met and sacrificed before proceeding to Delphi to transact its business.

1129–32 **Pytho**: the 'religious' name for the site of the sanctuary of Delphi. The reference here is to the quadrennial Pythian games held there, and probably also to the twice-yearly sessions of the Amphictyonic council (see previous note).

1129–32 **purify the altars ... with ... lustral water**: this sprinkling of the altar was an essential part of the preliminaries to a sacrifice (it was performed by dipping a brand from the altar fire in the basin of lustral water and then shaking the brand over the altar and the victim); so the phrase is another way of saying that at the sanctuaries mentioned

Athenians and Spartans, together with all other Greeks, make common sacrifices 'like members of one family'.

1133 **enemies ... with their barbarian hosts**: the plural 'enemies' suggests that the reference is to two (or more) separate hostile forces under separate leaders; and if so, the only likely candidates are Tissaphernes and Pharnabazus, the Persian satraps in western Asia Minor, who, taking advantage of the Athenian catastrophe in Sicily, were seeking independently, and to some degree in rivalry, to detach the Greek cities of the Asiatic mainland from the Athenian empire and bring them back under Persian rule (Thucydides 8.5–6), thus undoing a great part of the work of liberation performed by the Greek alliance led by Sparta and Athens in the Persian war of 480–479. Since Lysistrata is here reproaching Spartans and Athenians 'both alike', there can be no allusion to the prolonged mutual wooings carried on during 412 between the satraps (especially Tissaphernes) and the Spartans, in the course of which two Spartan representatives had actually agreed to recognize Persia's sovereignty over all territory ever possessed by the King's ancestors (Thuc. 8.18, 37): Lysistrata ignores these negotiations, just as in her references to earlier history she will carefully 'edit' the course of events and suppress everything unfavourable to her great theme of Spartan-Athenian solidarity and mutual aid (see on 1137–44 and 1150–6). Her accusation here is thus not that either Sparta or Athens has 'medized' by *inviting* or *permitting* Persia to reduce Greeks once more to subjection, but that by weakening Greece in general, and themselves and each other in particular, they have *tempted* the Persians to do so and made it easy for them.

1136 **my skinned cock**: cf. on 158, 739–740 (ii), 953.

1137–44 The Spartans are reminded of a time when the Athenians had helped them in their dire need. In 464 there was a catastrophic earthquake centred very near Sparta, in which almost every building in the city was destroyed though there was comparatively little loss of life. The helots (serfs) of Laconia and Messenia, together with some of the subject communities (*perioikoi*) in Laconia, at once rose in revolt and marched on Sparta; but finding the city defended they withdrew to Messenia and, basing themselves on Mount Ithome, conducted a prolonged and effective guerrilla campaign. After some time, perhaps in the spring of 462, the Spartans sought help against the rebels from their allies, including the Athenians; the Athenian assembly, despite the opposition of Ephialtes, were persuaded by Cimon to agree to the Spartan request and sent a substantial force under his command. This force (together with the other allied contingents) may perhaps have 'saved all Lacedaemon' in the sense of driving the rebels out of Laconia, but it did not end the war, and Lysistrata omits the sequel: the Spartans came to suspect that many of the Athenian troops sympathized with the rebels' cause and sent them home 'alone of all the allies' (Thucydides 1.102.3), a snub to Athens which resulted in the eclipse (and soon the ostracism) of Cimon, in the breaking of the Spartan-Athenian alliance, and within two or three years in war between Athens and the Peloponnesian League (Thucydides 1.102.4–105).

1138 **Pericleidas** was probably chosen as envoy because he had influential friends at Athens, of whom Cimon may have been one: he named a son Athenaeus just as Cimon gave one of his sons the name Lacedaemonius.

1140 **his scarlet cloak**: the blood-red *phoinīkis* always worn by Spartan soldiers. At Athens only officers wore it.

1141 **Messene**: neither a state nor a city of this name had existed in Greece proper since the conquest of Messenia (the south-western quarter of the Peloponnese) by the Spartans in the seventh century and the reduction of its people to serfdom. But the idea of Messene had remained alive: about 490 Anaxilas of Rhegium, a scion of the Messenian diaspora, had refounded Zancle in Sicily as a new Messene (now Messina), and it may well be that the rebels of 464 proclaimed themselves to be the *polis* of Messene. An independent Messene was finally re-established by the Thebans in 369.

1142 **the god**: Poseidon 'the earth-shaker'.

1143 **four thousand hoplites**: if this figure is correct, it may have been meant to represent half the total Athenian hoplite strength, which had been 8,000 at Plataea in 479.

1144 **Cimon**, son of Miltiades, was the most powerful politician at Athens during most of the 460s and the leading advocate of friendship with Sparta, as well as being an outstanding military commander with many victories to his credit, most notably the crushing defeat of the Persians at the river Eurymedon. After the fiasco of his expedition in support of Sparta he was banished by ostracism in 462–1; returning at the end of his ten-year term of exile, he was appointed to command another large expedition against the Persians, but died while besieging Citium in Cyprus.

1144 **Lacedaemon**: I here retain this name in the translation (elsewhere I have generally replaced it by 'Sparta') because the addition of 'all' suggests that it refers here not just to the city of Sparta but to the whole of Laconia.

1148 **we're in the wrong**: the blurting out of this admission is perhaps not so much a sign of conscience-stricken remorse as of desperation: the Spartan will do or say anything to speed the return of peace (and sex). So in 1161–72 he gets decidedly the worse of the 'territorial' bargaining; so already in 168–174 Lampito had assumed that the women's sex-strike would be much more certain to coerce the Spartan men than the Athenian.

1149 **You think ... do you?**: Lysistrata is replying to the Athenian's remark of 1147, 1148 having been an aside.

1150–6 After the assassination of Hipparchus in 514 (see on 632), the rule of his brother Hippias (see on 619) became much more oppressive, and after the unsuccessful campaign based on Leipsydrium (see on 664 and 665) Athenian exiles eventually, in 510, succeeded in persuading Sparta to intervene. They first sent a force by sea under Anchimolus, but this was defeated near Phalerum with the help of Thessalian cavalry, and Anchimolus killed. Sparta then sent a larger force by land under king Cleomenes, which routed the Thessalians, killing forty or fifty of them, and then joined Hippias' Athenian opponents in besieging him on the Acropolis; after a few days Hippias was forced to capitulate when some of his sons and nephews were captured while trying to escape. He and his family were required to leave Attica within five days; they went into exile at Sigeum. Once again Lysistrata omits the sequel: only three years later Cleomenes was in Attica again, not now to overthrow tyranny but to

strangle a newborn democracy, in which aim he failed ignominiously (see on 273).

1151 **you were all wearing slaves' smocks**: to be understood figuratively (as is the 'warm cloak' of 1156 with its echo of 586). The garment in question (the *katōnakē*) was a coarse one of sheepskin and untrimmed wool, associated with slaves.

1153 **many comrades and allies of Hippias**: no other source records these further casualties. Either (i) Lysistrata has invented them to enhance the Spartans' achievement, or (ii) she has illicitly counted the Thessalian cavalry dead twice, first as 'men of Thessaly' and then as 'comrades and allies', or (iii) Aristophanes has been misled by some unclarity of expression on the part of his (oral or written) source.

1157 **I've never seen a nobler woman**: it is now the Spartan's turn to express warm approval of Lysistrata's speech.

1158 **And I've never seen a prettier pussy**: throughout this scene the Athenian's sexual thoughts are vaginal (cf. 1169–70) while the Spartan's are anal (1148, 1162–4, 1174); see next note.

1162–3 **this Rotunda**: Greek *enkuklon* 'something circular', referring (i) to the fortified promontory of Pylos, (ii) to Reconciliation's anus (cf. on 417). The Spartans had a reputation for being given to practising anal copulation with women as well as men; one story claimed that this Spartan custom began when the young Spartan girl Helen was buggered by Theseus.

1163 **Pylos**: see on 104. In the summer of 410 Sparta offered peace to Athens on the terms that each side should remove its garrisons in the other's territory (i.e. the Athenians should evacuate Pylos and the Spartans Deceleia) and otherwise each should retain what it held. There is a *double entendre* on the name Pylos and the noun *pulē* 'gate, portal, orifice'.

1164 **probing around**: Greek *blīmazein* 'feel over, palpate' is here used metaphorically in reference to Spartan reconnaissances of, or probing attacks on, the defences of Pylos – but again with a *double entendre,* since this verb most commonly refers to the amatory handling of women's erogenous zones.

1166 **to stir up**: Messenian exiles had been encouraged by the Athenians to use Pylos as a base for guerrilla activities in Messenia and Laconia, causing the Spartans to fear a general revolt of the helots. These Messenians, together with escaped helots who had joined them, were removed from Pylos by the Athenians in 421 but allowed to return in 419–8 . The Athenians now fear to lose this means of 'stirring up' the helots against their Spartan masters. But there is yet another *double entendre:* the verb *kīnein* 'stir up, set in motion' also means 'copulate with'.

1168–9 **this Hedgehog location**: the Greek names the town of Echinūs ('place of sea-urchins') on the northern (Thessalian) shore of the Malian Gulf, almost opposite the western tip of Euboea. Sparta had sought a footing in this region since 426 when she had established the colony of Heracleia-in-Trachis near the head of the Gulf, and in late 413 king Agis had led an army to the area and tried to force its peoples to join the Spartan alliance by plundering, confiscations and hostage-taking (Thucydides 8.3.1). Echinus itself was an unimportant place; it is chosen for mention here because its name is susceptible of a double meaning, since words

meaning 'hedgehog' or 'sea-urchin' were sometimes used to denote the female pubic region with its prickly hair.

1169–70 **the Malian inlet behind it**: geographically incorrect, since for anyone coming (whether by land or sea) from Attica or the Peloponnese the Malian Gulf lies *in front* of the coast on which Echinus stood. The speaker, however, is not thinking in terms of geography but of anatomy: the 'Malian inlet' (*Mēlieus kolpos*) that lies behind Reconciliation's pubic region is her vagina (for which *kolpos* was a standard medical term), located as it is (from certain angles, cf. perhaps 231) between two *mēla* (properly 'apples' or 'quinces', but applied to anything rounded and soft; here evidently buttocks).

1170 **the Legs of Megara**: this is the earliest attested use of *skelē* 'legs' to denote a pair of long walls linking a city to its port, such as those between Athens and the Peiraeus. Such a pair of walls had been built between Megara and its southern port of Nisaea in the 450s, when Megara was an ally of Athens. In 424, when the Athenians were attempting to capture Megara, they succeeded in taking Nisaea, and broke down part of the long walls to secure this base against attack from the city; some months later the anti-Athenian oligarchs, by then firmly in control of Megara, demolished the walls altogether. The Athenians had held Nisaea ever since, and restoration of the walls might aid another attempt on their part to gain control of Megara. In fact the Megarians retook Nisaea in 409.

1171 **we're not giving all that**: not only has the Athenian demanded three places in compensation for one, but from the sexual point of view Athenian control of the 'legs' may seriously interfere with Spartan access to the 'Rotunda' (1162–3). But the Spartan's physical plight is too severe for him to sustain his protest for long (cf. on 1148).

1173 **to strip off now and get down to some husbandry**: Aristophanes often envisages the restoration of peace as the restoration of agricultural activity, largely abandoned when the Attic countryside was evacuated and ravaged in the years after 431 and again after the Spartan occupation of Deceleia in 413.

1174 **to get among the muck**: lit. 'to carry manure' to the fields; but any reference to excrement by a Spartan, in a context like this, will be interpreted as a reference to anal copulation. Aristophanes ignores the fact that Spartan citizens, unlike Athenian citizens, did not themselves do agricultural work.

1175 **when you've made the peace**: the war will not be over until the terms agreed by the negotiators have been accepted by the assemblies of their respective states (and their alliances: see next note) and representatives of the two sides have taken oath to abide by them. In the play, for obvious dramatic reasons, this process will be short-circuited.

1177 **discuss it with your allies**: actually Athens had long since assumed sole control of the policy of her alliance (or empire); Sparta did have to secure the agreement of a conference of her allies on major questions of war and peace, and both in 421 and in 404 some major allied states were against peace but were outvoted. Here, for the sake of the symmetry which has on the whole prevailed throughout the scene, it is assumed that both sides must consult their allies – but neither sees any need to do so.

1178 **we're too hard up for that**: *estūkamen* ('we have erections').

1179 **us two**: again (cf. 1097–8) a first-person expression is employed in a way that unites the speaker with his former enemy.

1180 **a fucking policy**: i.e. a peace policy.

1180 **the Carystians**: cf. on 1059.

1182 **maintain purity**: cf. on 912. The men are not to satisfy their desires until after leaving the Acropolis – i.e. until after they have bound themselves by oath to observe the peace (1185). Henceforth there are no more references in the text to their physical distress, which would not be in tune with the mood of a celebratory ending to the play: such distress, like that of hunger, is in any case easier to bear when one knows it will end soon.

1184 **what we brought in our handboxes**: a Greek going out for a meal (e. g. to a friend's house – if, as often, the friend provided only part of the food – or to a sanctuary) would take his (or her) food along in a handy-sized box. It is conveniently forgotten that the women left home five days ago (881).

1189–94 **Embroidered caparisons ... being basket-bearer**: the chorus (pretend to) offer on free loan some of the expensive clothes and accessories that parents might need for adolescent sons or daughters chosen to take part in a festival procession, especially that at the Panathenaea.

1189 **caparisons**: Greek *strōmata* 'spreads' is normally used of bedclothes.

1190 **dress clothes**: Greek *khlanidia*, the diminutive form of *khlanis*, a fine outer garment worn on special occasions such as festivals and weddings.

1190 **stately robes**: the *xustis* was a heavy, full-length outer garment, generally coloured and often richly ornmented, worn especially (i) by charioteers in festival processions (*Clouds* 70 with scholia) and (ii) by kings on the tragic stage.

1190–2 **all of these that I own I ... make available**: perfectly true: he owns none, and is making none available.

1194 **being basket-bearer**: cf. on 646.

1198 **sealed up**: chests containing valuables were usually secured by sealing rather than by locks; if the seal was broken it could not be remade except by the possessor of the original signet, and hence unauthorized intrusion could not go undetected.

1199 **the sealings**: lit. 'the soils', i.e. the clay which was used for sealing.

1207 **a quart**: the Greek *khoinix* was actually rather less than a quart or rather more than a litre.

1212 **wheat** is repeated to emphasize the superior quality of the corn on offer, in contrast with the barley which was the normal staple fare of the poor.

1212 **Manes**: see on 908.

1214 **you're not to approach my door**: contrary to first impressions, the speaker is not here contradicting himself, any more than in the three previous stanzas. His servant will indeed be on hand, probably in the open interior courtyard of his house, to supply free corn to all comers – *if* they are brave (or rash) enough to try and get past the ferocious dog at the front door, and lucky enough to succeed!

1216–24 In the absence of ancient stage directions, and of clear signals in the text of the identities of those involved, it is hard to be certain what is happening in this passage (and its pendant 1239–40).

1218 **Vulgar routine, that**: here it is not the character who speaks but the actor, commenting on a piece of comic 'business' which he professes to find beneath his dignity and refuses to perform.

1220 **we'll suffer ... to do you a favour**: 'you' denotes the audience, and the actors' 'suffering' consists in having to prolong a scene that falls so painfully below the standards of the legitimate drama, when it might have been brought to a merciful close had the slaves been allowed to depart at 1218 as they had seemed about to do, or had noisy elements in the audience not insisted that the slapstick routine should continue (of course this is all pretence; Aristophanes made the speaker refuse to perform the routine precisely in order to provoke this audience reaction).

1222 **for that hair of yours**: this *may* imply that the men crowding round the doors have long hair, which male slaves at Athens never did.

1228 **when we're sober we go out of our minds**: those who are clever when sober are stupid when drunk; hence those who are stupid when sober must be clever when drunk!

1231–5 **At the moment ... the same exchanges**: this must refer to some particular occasion when members of an Athenian embassy to Sparta came home with contradictory reports, but we cannot identify the occasion; cf. on 1117.

1234 **suspect them of meaning things which they don't say**: Spartan duplicity was notorious (cf. on 629); but if one side takes it as axiomatic that the other is always being duplicitous, it is a waste of time to negotiate at all.

1237 **'Telamon' ... 'Cleitagora'**: these were popular symposiac songs (*skolia*).

1240 **whipping-posts**: Greek *mastīgiai*, persons (typically slaves) who have been much whipped, or who are fit only for whipping.

1242 **my gracious sir**: a character addressing the stage piper (who had accompanied the chorus throughout the performance). It is also possible that the piper has entered from the Acropolis with the Spartans. In any case the piper is not himself a Spartan: the Athenian's appeal to him in 1245 indicates that the piper is at first hesitant about agreeing to play on an instrument unfamiliar to him.

1242 **the puffers**: it is likely that the instrument is some form of bagpipe.

1243 **two-step**: a Spartan dance which must have been dignified and graceful.

1247 **this young man**: the singer is apparently referring to himself; the significance of mentioning his age is that he is too young to remember the Persian invasion at first hand. In real life it is not very likely that an important embassy would be led by a man who could be classed as 'young'; but the plot of his play, and in particular the use made by Lysistrata in 1114ff of the mute personage Reconciliation, requires that all the peace-delegates should be in the prime of life, maximally vulnerable to sexual deprivation and maximally susceptible to sexual temptation.

1248 **O Memory**: Memory was mother of the Muses.

1251 **at Artemisium**: the naval battles off Artemisium, the northernmost point of Euboea, were fought on three successive days in the summer of 480, at the same time as the land battle of Thermopylae; of 333 Greek ships that took part in all or some of the fighting, 200 were Athenian. The singer is somewhat generous in crediting the Athenians with a victory: the Persian losses (partly in the fighting, partly in a storm) were certainly heavy, but the much smaller Greek fleet was also badly mauled (at the end of the three days only half the Athenian ships were fit for further action) and might well have had to retreat even without the news that the defenders of Thermopylae had been defeated.

1254 **Leonidas** succeeded his half-brother Cleomenes (see on 273) as Agiad king of Sparta. In 480 he led the contingent of 300 Spartans who took part in the defence of the pass of Thermopylae, where he and all his men were killed.

1255–8 **whetting our teeth ... around our cheeks**: the language is that of a series of boar-similes in the *Iliad* (11.416, 13.474, 20.168–9).

1259 **much also poured down our legs**: this must of course be a different kind of 'foam', probably a mixture of blood and sweat.

1262 **Lady of the Wild**: a title under which Artemis was worshipped both by Spartans and by Athenians, and which could readily be associated with memories of their common struggle against the Persians; for the Spartans had the custom of sacrificing a yearling goat to Artemis Agrotera before joining battle, while the Athenians offered her 500 goats each year in fulfilment of a vow made before the battle of Marathon.

1270 **wily foxes**: referring to 'the villainous politicians', both in Athens and in Sparta, who might in the future, as allegedly in the past, subvert peace from selfish or corrupt motives.

1273 **the rest of the business**: i.e. the swearing of the peace (cf. 1185).

1275–6 **let man stand beside wife and wife beside man**: we are thus to have (though apparently not till 1296ff) a dance by couples – something as exceptional in Greek life (and drama) as it is commonplace in modern life (and musical, opera and ballet).

1279 **the Graces**: Greek *Kharites*, goddesses of beauty and delight. They are to be *brought into* the dance (whereas the other gods will merely be *invited to* it as spectators), i.e. they are to imbue the performers with grace and beauty.

1281 **her twin, the kindly Healer**: Apollo.

1282 **Nysa**: a fictional mountain of no fixed abode, associated with the name Dionysos and traditionally the place where that god was nursed in infancy by the local nymphs.

1285 **Zeus flaming with fire**: the fire is that of the thunderbolt which Zeus carries.

1286 **the blessed Lady his consort**: Hera.

1290 **Cypris**: commonly used in poetry as an alternative name for Aphrodite.

1292 **raise it high** probably indicates that the dance includes high kicks.

1293 **in the dance of victory**: lit. 'as on the occasion of a victory', referring both to the victory of the peace forces within the play and to the anticipated victory of the play itself in the comic competition.

1296 **Taÿgetum**: see on 117.

1298 **the god of Amyclae**: Apollo, who had a famous sanctuary at Amyclae on the right bank of the Eurotas below Sparta.

1299 **Athena of the Bronze House**: Athena was the citadel-goddess of Sparta as of Athens, and her bronze(-plated) temple stood on the highest point of the city.

1300 **the noble sons of Tyndareos**: Castor and Pollux (cf. on 81).

1301 **beside the Eurotas**: doubtless the reference here and in 1308 is to the celebrated exercise-ground called the Dromos just outside Sparta.

1313 **the thyrsus**: the bacchant's ritual wand, a fennel rod tipped with ivy leaves.

1314 **Leda's daughter ... pure and comely**: at Sparta, and at nearby Therapne, Helen was worshipped as a goddess, and was thought of, not as the adulterous wife for whose sake thousands perished, but as the ideal type of a Spartan maiden and bride.

1320–1 **sing in praise of ... the Lady of the Bronze House**: these words, like the concluding words of *Acharnians* (1233–4) and *Wealth* (1209), are evidently designed to introduce an exit-song for the chorus which, as in those two plays, does not appear in the book-text and presumably never did. Probably in all three cases the exit-songs were omitted from the text because their words (and no doubt their music too) were traditional and neither composed nor adapted by the dramatist.

Reading 2.21 Thucydides 1.20: Harmodius and Aristogeiton

(Source: Crawley, R. (trans.) (1997) *Thucydides: The History of the Peloponnesian War*, 1.20, Ware: Wordsworth Editions, p.12)

Having now given the result of my inquiries into early times, I grant that there will be a difficulty in believing every particular detail. The way that most men deal with traditions, even traditions of their own country, is to receive them all alike as they are delivered, without applying any critical test whatever. The general Athenian public fancy that Hipparchus was tyrant when he fell by the hands of Harmodius and Aristogiton; not knowing that Hippias, the eldest of the sons of Pisistratus, was really supreme, and that Hipparchus and Thessalus were his brothers; and that Harmodius and Aristogiton suspecting, on the very day, nay at the very moment fixed on for the deed, that information had been conveyed to Hippias by their accomplices, concluded that he had been warned, and did not attack him, yet, not liking to be apprehended and risk their lives for nothing, fell upon Hipparchus near the temple of the daughters of Leos, and slew him as he was arranging the Panathenaic procession.

Reading 2.22 Three drinking songs

(Source: Anonymous; trans. J.E. Robson)

These traditional drinking songs celebrate the assassination in 514 BCE of Hipparchus, the younger brother of Athenian tyrant Hippias.

(*PMG*[2]893)

I shall carry my sword in a branch of myrtle
Just like Harmodius and Aristogeiton
When they killed the tyrant
And made Athens democratic.

(*PMG* 895)

I shall carry my sword in a branch of myrtle
Just like Harmodius and Aristogeiton
When, during sacrifices in Athens,
They killed the tyrant Hipparchus.

(*PMG* 896)

You will always have fame on earth,
Beloved Harmodius and Aristogeiton
Because you killed the tyrant
And made Athens democratic.

Reading 2.23 Thucydides 1.102: The revolt of the helots

(Source: Crawley, R. (trans.) (1997) *Thucydides: The History of the Peloponnesian War*, 1.102, Ware: Wordsworth Editions, pp.52–3)

(The Spartans (or Lacedaemonians) appeal to the Athenians for help in quelling the revolt of the helots, Sparta's servile population, in 462 BCE. Mount Ithome is where the helots have made their stronghold.)

The Lacedaemonians meanwhile finding the war against the rebels in Ithome likely to last, invoked the aid of their allies, and especially of the Athenians, who came in some force under the command of Cimon. The reason for this pressing summons lay in their reputed skill in siege operations; a long siege had taught the Lacedaemonians their own deficiency in this art, else they would have taken the place by assault. The first open quarrel between the Lacedaemonians and Athenians arose out of this expedition. The Lacedaemonians, when assault failed to take the place, apprehensive of the enterprising and revolutionary character of the Athenians, and further looking upon them as of alien extraction, began to fear that if they remained, they might be tempted by the besieged in Ithome to attempt some political changes. They accordingly dismissed them alone of the allies, without declaring their suspicions, but merely saying that they had now no need of them. But the Athenians, aware that their dismissal did not proceed from the more honourable reason of the two, but from suspicions which had been conceived, went away deeply offended, and conscious of having done nothing to merit such treatment from the Lacedaemonians; and the instant that they returned home they broke off the alliance which had been made against the Mede, and allied themselves with Sparta's enemy Argos; each of the contracting parties taking the same oaths and making the same alliance with the Thessalians.

[2] *PMG*: Page, D.L. (1962) *Poetae Melici Graeci*, Oxford: Oxford University Press – the standard edition of the Greek text of these songs. *Poetae Melici Graeci* means 'Greek Lyric Poets'.

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